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VERSAILLES AND THE TRIANONS

VERSAILLES
AND THE
TRIANONS

BY

PIERRE DE NOLHAC

DIRECTOR OF THE VERSAILLES MUSEUM

ILLUSTRATED IN COLOR BY

RENÉ BINET

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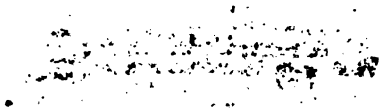
1906



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Chapter One

VERSAILLES IN HISTORY AND ART

VERSAILLES fills so large a place in the traditions of the French nation and in the history of its art that it behoves the foreigner to acquire an accurate idea of it, and to visit it with care and attention. It is necessary to know Versailles thoroughly, with its palace, its gardens, and its memories, if one wishes to understand the facts of the political and artistic pre-eminence of France during one period of her old régime.

The visitor who comes to this famous spot for the first time should, in order to obtain a vivid and true impression of it, avoid the town itself as far as possible, and approach the Palace through the parks that are on that side. If he wishes to have a complete idea of the place he should be careful first to make the round of the Palace and gardens without entering them, and then, approaching by the St. Cyr road, for instance, or from the Trianon direction, enter the gardens at their furthest point on the west-

ern side, through the gates that are near the Grand Canal. He will thus have followed all the roads through the wide avenues and glades of the great park of former days, avenues and glades that have been preserved in the heart of the woods that once heralded the approach of a royal residence. When the visitor leaves his carriage, and stands at the gates of the magnificent garden, he will find that there is no recent building, no sign of modern civilisation visible, to divert his thoughts from the insistent memories of an older day; he can imagine himself to be approaching a domain of the past that has never suffered change.

By the basin in which the great trees are reflected, where the Car of Apollo and the Horses of the Sun rise above the waters, the long line of the Royal Avenue opens out. The eye follows its double row of statues and its grass plots, and rising step by step, catches at last a straitened glimpse of the outline of the Palace among the foliage. One can distinguish fairly well from here the windows of the Galerie des Glaces, upon which the setting sun glows every evening fantastically. And the path along which the eye has darted in an instant may be traversed on foot in a few minutes—among the flower-beds, or under the high arches of the trees, towards the terrace, behind which the half seen

building is gradually hidden and at last disappears altogether.

Suddenly, when one has mounted the staircase of Latona, the whole mass of the building comes into view in its entire length and in much its most imposing aspect. The centre of the Palace, where the royal apartments were, projects in a strong, square mass, the effect of which is lightened by colonnades and a quantity of sculpture; on each side an immense wing extends, repeating, a hundred paces further back, the plan of this noble design, and the pointed roof of the chapel is the only interruption to the monotony of the lines. To the right they end in a projection, above a distant horizon; to the left they are merged in the lofty heights of the trees, which thus seem to carry on the majestic effect of the architecture.

This is the spot where one may see at a glance, in its almost unaltered glory and in its perfect unity, the most famous dwelling-place of the Monarchy, designed by King Louis XIV. to serve as the symbol of his reign and the monument of his greatness.

In this way one may secure a preliminary lesson from history, and at the same time enjoy a first impression of the dominating beauty of this building that can never be effaced. If one has the time, one

may then turn one's attention to the details, and employ months and years in learning them, by reading the books that have been written by experts on the period of the former Court, and on French artists of the past. If the visitor has a taste for architecture, or sculpture, or decorative painting, he may here propound and solve a thousand problems. The interior of the palace, ravaged by endless changes but nevertheless full of uninjured relics of the best periods, will give him the most fruitful of educations. The more closely he can fix his attention, and the oftener he can repeat his visits, the greater number of interesting works he will find. The documents of the past—if he criticises them methodically, rejecting the false myths that are collected in so many works—will re-create for him the most brilliant era of a great nation, and he will feel that there is nowhere that the past can be brought to life more vividly than in the decorations of Versailles.

The double attraction of art and history gives this Palace a rare prestige; a prestige, indeed, that might be called unique if it were not for the existence of the Vatican. There is no princely dwelling in Europe that combines so many glorious and interesting memories in a setting of such perfect beauty. France, who for a long time despised this treasure,

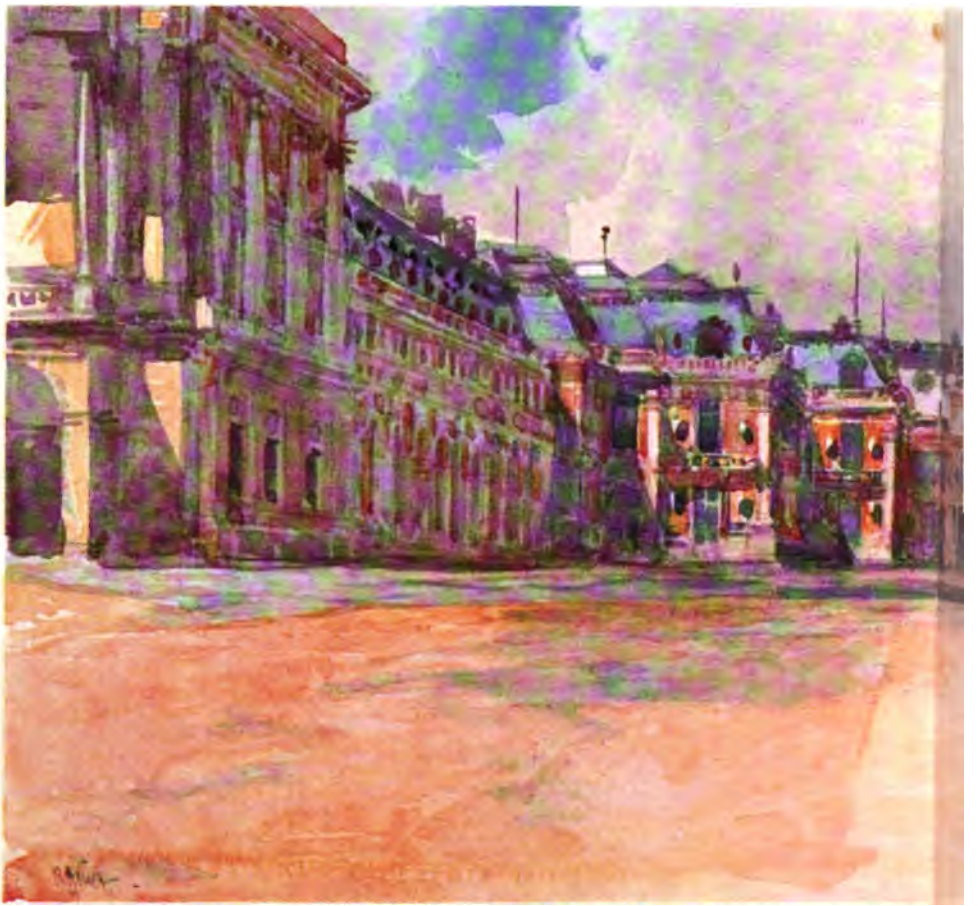
as she squandered so many others, is happy to-day in the possession of it, and is making every effort to repair the effects of her long neglect. This work, which is the synthesis of absolute monarchy, is the one that this nation—now so democratic—shows to foreigners with the greatest pride. There is none, in any other place, which educated men of all countries seek with a more lively curiosity; it would seem as though they regarded it, in some respects, as the spot most characteristic of the genius of this nation.

It was a movement of pride that prompted Louis XIV. to build Versailles, when he had reached the zenith of his power. He desired to have the most beautiful and the most splendid dwelling in the world; to surpass even Italy, where hitherto the finest designs in architecture had been found. Whatever may have been the inspiring thought of the founder, the remembrance of it in no wise changes our judgment of the achievement, so strong and so complete, that we owe to Louis XIV. We cannot even deny him the merit of having conceived it himself, and of having determined upon the form its beauty should take. The greatest glory of the *Grand Roi* is derived from the perfection reached by literature during his century, and from the wealth of artistic production. It is with regard to the latter

that the master's personal influence is most obvious and most undeniable.

The creation of Versailles contributed very greatly to that prodigious development of French art, which thenceforward took the place of Italian art as the director of taste in general. So many artists—the best in every line of art—united in the same work and at first guided by the illuminating mind of Colbert, so many marvels accumulated in the same spot for the glorification of a single king and a single nation, so much genius working for a common end, and so great an achievement of money and men, made upon the mind of Europe a more powerful impression than any victory or any treaty! And the influence obtained by force of arms was more lasting and more fruitful because of it. The palaces built in imitation of Versailles in the very countries where Louis XIV. was hated the most, such as Germany, bear witness to the admiration inspired by this masterpiece of the art of the monarchy, and prove its dominating influence over the minds of the day.

After having suffered for long years from unmeasured contempt and disparagement, Versailles has once more, to a certain extent, taken the place in the national imagination that it formerly held. This mighty artistic creation of the "great reign,"



THE PALACE OF VERSAILLES

ES: SIDE FACING THE COURTS

uninjured by the following reigns as regards its principal lines, and even the nineteenth century—so destructive of the relics of France—is at last understood as it deserves to be. For a long time it was less favourably judged.

By the close of the old régime, and indeed even in the time of Louis XV., one of those convulsions in the taste of the French nation which are apt in that country to destroy any particular form of admiration so quickly, had attacked a work whose importance should have held it secure from the caprices of fashion. In the time of Marie Antoinette, Le Petit Trianon, with its delicate decoration and its "English" garden, was contrasted with Versailles by the writers and intelligent people of the day, and helped to make it despised. The theories of the French Revolution tended to bring contempt upon Versailles and upon the art that had conceived it. The romantic period, whose æsthetic principles were so impassioned and so narrow, finally brought both into complete disrepute. The famous verses of Alfred de Musset are sufficient evidence as to the opinion of his contemporaries with regard to "the tiresome park of Versailles." Large parts of the building, such as the Great Gallery of Mansart and Le Brun, excited amazement rather than interest. The art of Louis XIV.'s day seemed to be dead, to-

gether with the institutions that had produced it; and a still greater degree of indifference enshrouded that charming, graceful, vivid art that had come in the eighteenth century to rejuvenate and adorn with its woodwork and its bronzes the grave dignity of the royal dwellings.

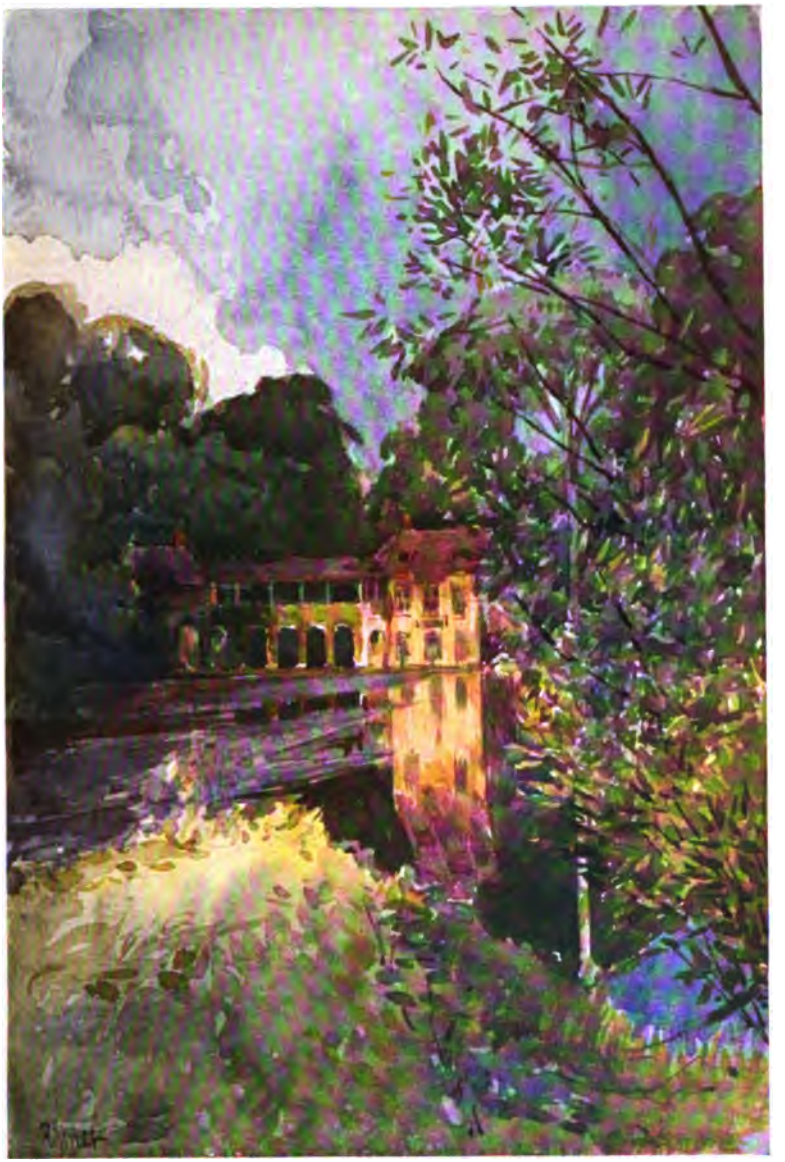
One boon that our eclectic education has given us is that in our day we are able to admire and to understand with equal insight the principles of the most different styles of beauty, and of manifestations of creative power which seem to contradict one another. With regard to architecture, who would refuse his admiration to the Parthenon at Athens, or to the church of St. Sophia, or to the great Gothic cathedrals? These, certainly, are works of a superior order to Versailles, in virtue of the object for which they were built, if for no other reason, seeing that they do honour to God, and reveal Him to men. The Palace of Louis XIV. testifies only to the power of a monarch and of a political régime. But it expresses this with sufficient clearness and in an artistic language of sufficient brilliancy to enable one to take pleasure in it, even after having paid intelligent homage to works of human genius that are infinitely nobler. The Beautiful, it is true, has not the same strength here, and does not create the same enjoyment, but it nevertheless in a certain measure opens

the sluice-gates of enthusiasm. Like other famous corners of the earth, Versailles has become, for many of our contemporaries, one of the goals of artistic pilgrimage. Many talented minds find here a kind of moral support; artists of the first rank come hither to seek for methods and models, and the poets—and this is significant—are again finding inspiration here.

What are the causes, we may ask, of this reversion of the popular taste, of which there are so many signs? The causes are principally two, of which one rests entirely on sentiment, while the other is of a more intellectual order. First, then, every one can see that one of the least contested beauties of Versailles lies in the silence of its great spaces, and in the already venerable appearance of its buildings. And the more the absence of the rush of modern life makes itself felt the greater is the pleasure to be derived from invoking the splendours of the past, and the easier it is to do so. This invocation of the past, which is one of the subtlest pleasures of the mind, is within the reach of the humblest of the people, and inspires in them a feeling of emotion which, unconscious of it though they be, is not without its element of truth and of nobility. With artists, and people of some measure of culture, this pleasure attains its highest degree, which is only ex-

perienced by those who have devoted to Versailles, not merely the hurried days of the tourist, but the prolonged leisure of quiet weeks.

There are few towns that bring the great revolutions of history more vividly before us. It seems as though the destructive forces that were raging for nearly a century, owing to the indifference of some and the very deliberate blunders of others, had increased the value of such places as have remained intact. At every turn the imaginative mind may find cause for emotion. A king is visible in the apotheosis of the Grand Gallery, in spite of the fact that there is nothing left of the marvellous furniture of silver and enamel that once adorned it. In the same way Trianon is filled with the memory of a Queen, a memory that will never vanish from the little houses of the crumbling hamlet until the day when necessity or caprice shall undertake to rebuild them. If we are prepared to mistrust the accepted myths we may follow the history of three reigns step by step, detail by detail, throughout this noble demesne of Versailles, which is made so complete by the Grand Trianon of Louis XIV. and the Petit Trianon of Marie Antoinette. The essential portions of the decorations are still there, while the memories of the *Grand Siècle,* and the still more exciting and graphic stories of the eighteenth cen-



HAMLET OF THE PETIT TRIANON: THE QUEEN'S HEAD

tury, bring back for us the men and women of the past, and make them live again.

The other cause that has replaced Versailles in its old position of honour exists only for really cultivated minds, but seems no less likely to endure. It is only now that any just idea is being formed of the place occupied in the history of art by that united whole, so complete and yet so imposing in extent, that we may name "the Art of Versailles." For a long time it was called in question on account of its symmetry, its want of spontaneity, its stiff pomposity. But the qualities that were taken for intolerable faults have changed their names, to suit the alteration in the point of view of taste. It is now recognised that the building, as a whole, as well as the details that adorn it, show all the merits of balance, proportion, and dignity. It is of course allowable to prefer other qualities to these; it may be thought that they tend to hold creative imagination in check; but it is a fact that they represent the essential characteristics of French art.

This representative value deserves to be noted above all others. It is proportionately similar to the value attached to the best French cathedrals of the thirteenth century. The seventeenth century, which endowed Paris and the provinces with such noble monuments—so greatly honoured to-day—

seems to be epitomised in the dwelling of Louis XIV. All the great artists who were his contemporaries collaborated in this work, which aimed at the glorification of the national monarchy. Side by side with Le Brun, or under his orders, worked architects, sculptors, painters, smelters, carvers, and decorators of all kinds, of whom some had genius, but who, considering the influence under which they worked, might have done very well with mere technical skill. The Palace and its gardens are full of their masterpieces. We may regret that the academical school, in which the inspiration of our artists became congealed later on, should have drawn some of the elements of its æsthetic principles from Versailles; but it would be more just to ask ourselves what would be lacking to the self-expression of the French race, and to its legacy of national art, if Versailles had disappeared.

An attentive study of the different parts of Versailles will bring to light, beneath that appearance of unity that is revealed at the first glance, many variations of the style of the seventeenth century, and periods that have many points of difference may be distinguished in the creations of this long reign, which it is too much our custom to criticise as a whole.

The style of the original house, a simple hunting-

box of Louis XIII.'s, of which some walls are still existing, determined the character of the oldest buildings of Louis XIV. The latter are thus closely allied to the traditions of the French Renaissance. The first palace of the young King, the one to which he came to amuse Mademoiselle de la Vallière, the one that La Fontaine described poetically in *Les Amours de Psyche,* what was it but one of the prettiest châteaux of the Renaissance? The Versailles of the celebrated fêtes, as it still stood in 1668, of which the greater part, indeed, had been built by Louis XIII., showed a style of art that was by no means freed from earlier forms. And, by a coincidence, the King's power was not yet as widespread and as strong as it was destined to become through the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and during the following years.

It was in truth a fairy palace that rose then upon the still narrow slope, a palace all brightness and colour, with its façades of red brick, its balconies of wrought iron, its high, white chimneys, its pinnacles, and the gilded leads of its pointed roofs. Round the new royal dwelling, it is true, there were at first no wide steps, nor gushing fountains, nor marble figures, and the space where the noble lines of the Grand Canal came into being later on was for a long time merely a marshy plain. But King Louis

XIV. had the good fortune to find a gardener with a sense of grandeur: André Le Nôtre at the very first traced out the general design of the gardens of the future. The greater number of the shrubberies were cut out of the underwood of Louis XIII.'s former hunting-grounds; enormous basins were hollowed out in the low-lying places and were gradually filled with bubbling water; a little later groups of figures in gilded lead were placed in the centre of these basins, contrasting strikingly with their stone edges as they stood at the borders of the copses; an "embroidered flower-bed" of a new design was laid out in front of the building, and a little orangery completed the picturesque appearance of the Palace on its southern side by the mingled bricks and stone of its arcades.

This first structure, itself celebrated as a marvellous creation, was succeeded by a second Versailles, and our praise is due to the same architect in both cases. It was the architect Le Vau who, without destroying it, surrounded the little palace by the three façades facing the gardens, and so conceived the general design of the building that those who came after him had merely to develop it. The Grand Apartments and the Ambassadors' Staircase were begun at this period. It was at this time, too, that the first artists of the day initiated the symbolism

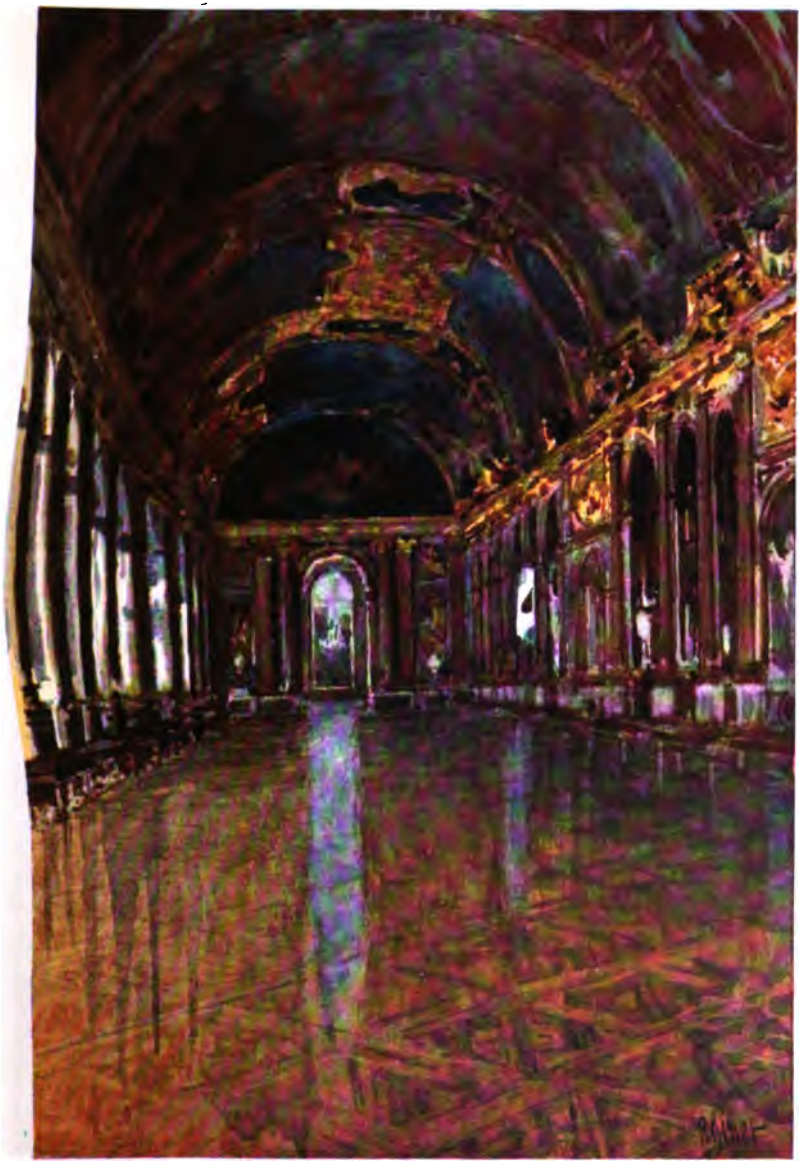
by which the decoration of Versailles, both in the painting and sculpture of the interior and in the subjects represented by the principal fountains, was a perpetual source of flattery and of allusion to the *Roi Soleil.* Versailles grew with the King's power: Louis by this time had vanquished Spain and the Empire, and was the conqueror of Franche Comté. His favourite palace symbolized his triumphs.

Another Versailles—the third already—was the work of Mansart. Mansart must yield the first place in our remembrance to Le Vau, since his superintendence began only in 1678; but his name, more than any other, was destined to be associated with the new town, on account of the enormous mass of buildings that he created there in the course of a few years. He began by making the Grand Gallery, and adding, on the south side of the Palace, the first of the two long wings necessary for the accommodation of the Court. And what was the reason for these immense alterations, this incredible magnificence? The reason was that the fate of the youngest of Royal Houses was forcing it to play a part for which the little *château de plaisirs* formed an unsuitable background. The King, as he became more and more engrossed in this work of his, wished to make it the central point of his

power, the spot where all Europe should be forced to admire the dazzling rays of the royal sun in all its brilliancy.

The installation of the Court and the Government in 1682 is the most important date in the history of Versailles. Mansart's plan was then adopted in its essential parts, though it was not to be realised all at once. After the Grand Stables and the Little Stables were built the Grand Offices,—an annexe to Versailles,—the north wing, and the new orangery, which involved the remodelling of a great part of the gardens. The rebuilding of Trianon was also Mansart's work, as well as the design of the beautiful chapel, which was only finished in 1710, five years before the death of Louis XIV. The Chapel was the last work of the dying reign, which seemed as though it would fain end by an act of homage to God its unparalleled series of labours devoted to the apotheosis of a man.

This majestic ornament of the "great reign" then, did not grow all at once into the building we admire in its melancholy solitude. The various palaces of Versailles, as revealed to us by prints and old forgotten pictures, were, so to speak, the first attempts, the rough drafts, of the final work, corresponding to the progress of the royal power. Every part of the Palace and the gardens was destroyed in its



THE GREAT GALLERY, OR GALERIE DES GLACES

turn, but only to be restored in a more beautiful form in accordance with the master's dream, ever growing more ambitious.

The restitution of these vanished conditions of the past forms the true history of royal Versailles. This history is comparable to that of a living organism, which grows and develops in accordance with its increasing needs, modifying itself continually in order to adapt itself to fresh circumstances. Nothing is easier than to make this plain by comparing with each other the successive plans of the Palace and its surroundings during the reign of Louis XIV. One can see the spaces widening, the buildings multiplying, and the size of everything that disappears being increased threefold and fourfold when it is replaced.

Each political period leaves its own special mark in the form of some important change in the building as a whole. And if, after the death of the *Grand Roi,* the external lines seem to change no more, the vital principle is no less active, for the royal owners of the Palace in the eighteenth century altered the interior arrangements to suit their own habits and their diminished prestige. Towards the end, indeed, the Palace seemed too large in proportion.

May we not say that the eighteenth century created

a fourth Versailles? This would be false if we were concerned with the structure alone, which remained externally the same; but it is true if we consider the enormous renovations that took place within the Palace. The Salon of Hercules, which recalls the name of an excellent architect, Robert de Cotte, was built by order of Louis XV.; and at the end of his reign arose the great Opera Hall, one of the finest achievements of Gabriel. On the other hand, this king destroyed, to suit his personal convenience, some very important parts of the old building, the Little Gallery, painted by Mignard, and the enormous Ambassadors' Staircase; he changed and cut up the apartments that were formerly Louis XIV.'s private rooms, and he modified in accordance with the new style all the other apartments of the royal family and the Court. This radical transformation of Versailles in the eighteenth century was not the work of a few years only; the most important parts of it were spread over the long reign of Louis XV., and to a small extent over that of Louis XVI. In fact, the arrangement of the interior of the Palace, as it appears to us to-day, is not that of Louis XIV.'s time. If the state rooms date for the most part from the seventeenth century, all the rest, all that remains of the private dwelling of the King, the Queen, the Dauphin, and the children of France, pre-

sents the appearance that was given to it in the eighteenth.

Louis XV. would have liked to destroy all the central part of the side that faced the courts in Louis XIV.'s building. The architects, indeed, had been suffering for a long time from the want of balance between the little château of brick that had been preserved on this side, and the splendid, regal façades that faced the park. Mansart had already proposed to cover up the entrance by way of the colonnades, if no more. In the eighteenth century a plan of general reconstruction was adopted, which was necessarily in the Greco-Roman style then so fashionable. The partial execution of this project produced the unfortunate wing with the pillars, called "Gabriel's wing," after Louis XV.'s great architect. This is the heavy structure that hides the chapel, and was provided with a *pendant* by the first Empire in the form of another pavilion with pillars. We must be careful to remember that these wings, the effect of which is so bad as one approaches from the Paris side, did not appear in the original design. They are mere indications, first steps in the entire reconstruction of the Palace on a new plan, a plan which would no doubt have had a dignity of its own, but would have involved the disappearance of the oldest parts of the Palace, that graceful "Marble

Court" in white and pink that one is so glad to see preserved.

At this same period the park of Versailles was entirely replanted; other alterations were projected, and more than one old grove of trees seemed to be in danger. As in the case of the Palace the want of funds prevented the carrying out of these commonplace and destructive designs, and it may be that we owe the preservation of Louis XIV.'s gardens, as well as that of the most ancient parts of the Palace, to the Revolution and the transfer of the Government to Paris.

After the disappearance of the Monarchy, which made it a centre of artistic production, the history of Versailles has no longer the same attraction. Napoleon, however, who sometimes stayed at the Grand Trianon, did not despise the most famous demesne of the old régime; he had dreams of making use of it and of living there, and he gave orders for a great deal of work. Restorations were begun, too, under Louis XVIII., who had a fleeting intention in 1819 of returning to the demesne where he had passed his youth as Comte de Provence. We shall speak presently of the occasion on which King Louis Philippe conceived the idea of making use of the finally deserted Palace, by devoting it, in the form of a museum, "to all the glories of France." This was

ANTEROOM, KNOWN AS THE ŒIL DE BŒUF

a colossal historical collection, gathered together at the King's expense, and designed to give to generations to come a representation of the great deeds and great men of the nation.

The inevitable mistakes made in the carrying out of this vast design for a museum were comparatively unimportant, since it was possible by the end of the nineteenth century to rectify them, and to complete this interesting idea, The same cannot be said, however, for the destruction that was involved within the building by Louis XVIII.'s undertaking: the profanations, the useless vandalisms, the unintelligent sacrifice of ancient art, and sometimes its preservation in the wrong place! Admirable examples of decorative art, scattered through the unused apartments, were mutilated unscrupulously and callously dispersed, as the sumptuous furniture of the Palace had been during the revolutionary sales. This irreparable loss is felt more forcibly every day, in proportion to our increasing love and respect for the art of the past.

We feel compelled nowadays to pass a severe judgment upon Louis Philippe, and we are hardly excusing him when we say that he shared the taste of nearly all his contemporaries. He merely put in practice the contempt that most people professed at that time for eighteenth-century art, with which

the rooms of Versailles were filled. To be just to every one, we must remember that this great uninhabited palace, in which a king who owed his position to the new democracy could not dream of living, would have been devoted, in a utilitarian century, to uses that would certainly have been destructive and might well have been degrading. If Louis Philippe, by destroying too much, injured Versailles in a way that we must always deplore, he assuredly saved it from worse disasters; he at least secured that it should be preserved to the country in the only way that was worthy of it—by fulfilling the noble functions of a national museum that should never change.

An epoch nearer our own devoted certain parts of the château, which are not occupied by the museum, to uses that were certainly unforeseen for Louis XIV.'s Palace. From 1871 to 1878 Versailles once more became the seat of the French Government, after the Franco-German War. And in the present day, in accordance with the Republican Constitution of 1875, the Palace is nominally the House of Parliament. This latest *rôle,* which we only remember nowadays on the occasion of electing a President of the Republic, involved considerable rearrangement. Louis XV.'s beautiful Opera House, after having been used for the sittings of the

Assembly of 1871, was reserved for the Senate, who have not been seen there for the last twenty years; and for the Chamber and meetings of the Congress an enormous new hall has been built in one of the South Courts.

Meanwhile the park and the façades of the Palace were falling into ruins. Public opinion was roused, and as the popular taste was becoming more and more in favour of the beauties of Versailles, the State decided to carry out important restorations in the body of the building. This indispensable undertaking, which has restored some of the finest plantations and some famous effects of water, and has been extended as far as the two Trianons, is not yet altogether completed and is being carried on energetically. About three million francs have already been spent upon it.

It appears unlikely that the château should undergo any notable alterations for many years to come. It still lends itself, to a certain extent, to the celebration of fêtes, which have not been wanting in the course of the nineteenth century, though it is true that these can only recall by mortifying comparisons the brilliancy of those of the old régime. But the interest of Versailles is concerned with more dignified matters, and is of permanent educational value. Setting aside the historical collections, in which so

many precious memories are gathered together, the Palace, its gardens, and its Trianons form a museum of decorative art such as can be seen nowhere else in the world. This, above everything else, must be made plain. We should arrive at this truth more easily if we could give life to these beautiful deserted rooms by replacing in them a part of the artistic furniture of the State. Their wainscotting, which is still intact, demands the furniture of our three grand styles, which has been so unfortunately scattered. Every one recognises that there is no place where it would show to more advantage, and the recent installation of a part of the crown tapestry shows what an admirable effect would be produced in such surroundings by the venerable objects that were there in days gone by.

The real interest of modern Versailles, as it appears to us at the beginning of the twentieth century, is concerned with the decorative art of France, of which we see here some of the most important examples; and also with the history of France, thanks to the Museum of portraits and scenes in the history of the nation, by means of which the life of the past is renewed. Nothing can be more interesting than to discover, on the walls of Louis XIV.'s great apartments, the pictures of the time, representing his Court and his military campaigns; or to find col-

lected in Madame de Maintenon's rooms the portraits of the famous men and women of her day; or to see, in the rooms of the Dauphin, Louis XV.'s son, surrounded by contemporary decorations, the whole of the society of the eighteenth century made to live again for us on canvas. This is a very fruitful study, and several days should be devoted to it.

Versailles, even half-furnished and bare—nay, even mutilated—is nevertheless a splendid page of history, always open before the eyes of the nation, and comprehensible to every one. But, whatever we may do to it, it still remains a huge ruin, and a huge tomb. Its animating principle exists no longer, and will never return to it in any other form; and the magnificence that was admired by two centuries is only to be found in isolated parts. Any effort to reproduce it, by restorations of a too detailed description, are condemned beforehand to failure. Who could pretend to reconstruct nowadays (except by thought and study) the sumptuous effects of the days of the Monarchy? The chimerical hope of restoring the past condition of a monument leads, in most cases, to its complete destruction. Let us rather enjoy what has survived; let us at all costs preserve everything that the touch of time has helped to beautify; let us respect the harmonious whole that it has created; and let us, by the help of the remains

that are left, guess what the achievement of Louis XIV. must have been in its magnificent completeness.

The thought which, from the historical point of view, must strike every visitor of any education, is the same that influences the work that still remains to be done; the thought, namely, that Versailles ceased to exist as a living work of art in the year 1789. Nothing could have been more interesting to us than to have had it preserved until now exactly as the Revolution found it. Indeed all of it that is earlier than that date, and has not been degraded by restoration, has a special charm for us, and claims a degree of respect of which the modern parts are unworthy. The latter may be repaired and improved without scruple; but we must hesitate long before we touch those that were conceived in a former day, and executed by the hands of experts, whose technical processes we have lost.

The artists of former days preyed upon one another, by a right conferred on them by their creative gift. The incident of the panels of Verberckt replacing, in Louis XV.'s time, those of Du Goulon, which were thrown into a barn, recalls the fate of Piero della Francesca's frescoes in the rooms of the Vatican, where Raphael ruthlessly covered them with his own new paintings. In the ages when crea-

CENTRAL FAÇADE, FRONTING THE PATERRE D'EAU

tive genius was strong the orders of the master for whom the artist worked—pope, or king, or powerful noble—were naturally inspired by the constant changes in taste; and it was by virtue of sacrifices, and often very cruel ones, that art progressed without becoming stereotyped in conventional forms. Not only have we lost this right of replacing one work of art by another, but we shall do well if we abstain from remaking those that have disappeared. For is it possible for us to put before critical eyes anything better than an imperfect resemblance, denuded of all power to recall what is gone? The successive restorations of the nineteenth century in historical buildings changed, in many cases, the style of work of their architects, because the actual design was lacking.

So rich is Versailles in every style that art is often to be found there in its first bloom and its original beauty. Of the many marvels with which it overflowed a large number has entirely disappeared; others, which have been touched by modern hands, have no longer any value but a symbolic and historical one; but many, fortunately, remain, and we have no reason to think that they are likely to be destroyed. The Parterre d'Eau, for example, and the bronzes cast by the Kellers, form a harmonious whole that seems imperishable. Such objects as

these, left where the hand of their creators placed them, are by no means rare at Versailles. They can be recognised at once, and one greets them respectfully as they stand among the rest, as faithful and venerable witnesses of the past. They will do honour to the France of the last two centuries as long as an artist lives to visit them, and as long as thoughtful minds take pleasure in the places where the figures of history can be made to live and move.

Chapter Two

THE PALACE AND THE APARTMENTS

THE visitor to Versailles would wish to find a reliable guide who could explain to him in the course of his visit the history of the various parts of the demesne, and give him accurate and clear information with regard to the works of art that have been preserved there, and the original arrangement of the different places. As there is no such guide it is our object to take the place of one, with a view to adding to the enjoyment, instruction, and convenience of the visitor.

The Palace is generally approached by the gate that opens on the great "Place d'Armes." In this square, which was made in the time of Louis XIV., three wide avenues converge, fanwise: in the centre the Avenue de Paris, to the left the Avenue de St. Cloud, and to the right the Avenue de Sceaux. These wide spaces were planned when the town of Versailles was first originated, when the King

sketched out, in the open, bare country, the design of a regular and majestic town, which should be a model to all his kingdom.

Between the Avenues are huge buildings known as the Grand Stable and the Little Stable, which are now used as barracks. They are built in a very grand style of architecture, and date from the time when the King settled finally at Versailles with his Court. They were designed by Mansart, the famous architect who gave the structure of Versailles its final form. The interior, which is closed to the public, is very fine. The Grand Stable to the left, with its back to the Palace, was designed for the horses and coach-houses of the carriages belonging to the Court; the Little Stable, to the right, sheltered the riding-horses used by the King, the Queen, and the Royal Family. There were 2500 horses in the two stables and the kennels.

We pass through the gate, which is the original one, and has eight pierced pilasters supporting a large lyre and a sun—the emblems of Louis XIV., which we shall meet at every step. The stone figures upon the guardhouses that flank the gateway are by Marsy and Girardon, and represent Victory holding up a crown and overpowering a captive; at the feet of one is the eagle of the Empire; at the feet of the other is the lion of Spain—symbols of the victories

won by Louis XIV. before the time that he came to live at Versailles.

On each side of the great court, which was formerly called the outer court, are large buildings of stone and brick, which contained the quarters of the four Secretaries of State and their offices. They are somewhat overpowered by the size of the statues near them, representing the great men of France, which were unfortunately placed here in the time of Louis Philippe, as well as the great bronze statue of Louis XIV., who seems to be welcoming the visitors who enter the gates of his palace. The two enormous pavilions with pillars and pediments, on which, when the museum was organised, were inscribed the words: *To all the Glories of France,* do not date from Louis XIV.'s time. The one by which the chapel is partly hidden was built at the end of Louis XV.'s reign, and, with the wing that is connected with it, formed the beginning of that entire reconstruction of these façades which was in progress when the design was interrupted by the Revolution. The corresponding pavilion was only erected, after the same plan, under Napoleon I. They occupy the place of older and lower wings, which were built of brick and stone, like everything that we see from here.

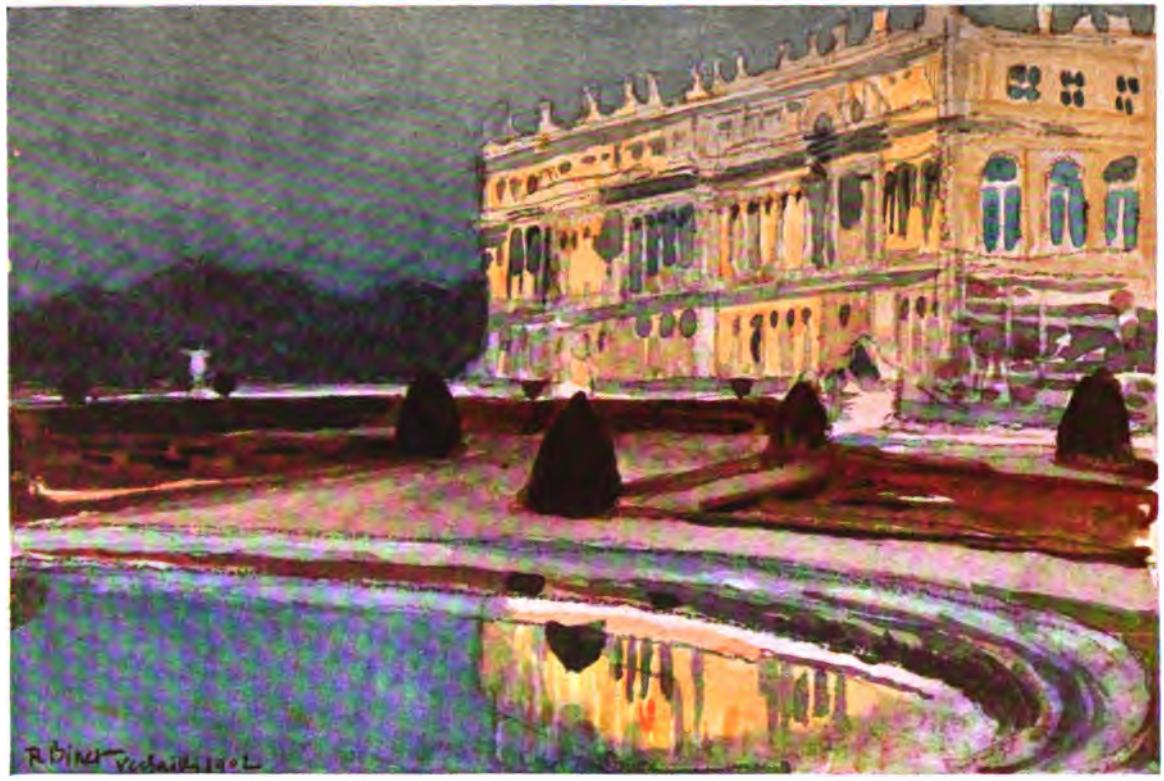
On the spot where Louis XIV.'s statue stands there used to be a semi-circular entrance-gate, separating

the outer court from the inner one, known as the Royal Court, into which no carriages might pass except those belonging to people who had "the privileges of the Louvre."

Quite at the back of this court, at the narrowest point of the Palace, several steps paved with marble led from the bare ground to the little marble court, which has unfortunately been restored at too low a level. A passage, which was always kept open, formerly communicated directly between the marble court and the gardens.

The decorative effect here is charming. With the gay colour of the brick is combined the brilliancy of the marble columns and the balconies of wrought and gilded iron. The faden ornaments which adorn the apices of the roofs so richly, the frames of the windows, and also the roof of the chapel, were formerly gilded, and gave an extraordinarily dazzling effect to the Royal dwelling, which could be seen from a great distance glittering in the sunshine.

The statues placed picturesquely on the balustrades of the roofs are the masterpieces of the best sculptors of the day, and represent the Four Quarters of the Globe, and the Chief Virtues of a King. The dial of the old clock is supported by figures of Mars and Hercules, by the sculptors Marsy and Girardon. It surmounts the raised part of the small central façade



THE PALACE FROM THE SOUTHERN PARTERRE

which marks the position of Louis XIV.'s room; this façade was rebuilt in his day; the two others, with the exception of the decorations, are similar to those of the original small château of Louis XIII.

In the Royal Court were the two large entrances to the Palace, connected with the two great principal staircases; they are recognisable in the three great arcades on each side of the court. The one on the right led to the grand staircase of the Ambassadors, the most important and the handsomest in the Palace, which was destroyed by Louis XV. and replaced by suites of rooms. Although this masterpiece is very well known by means of old engravings, we will not speak of it here, since there is not a vestige of it left; and we will enter the Palace by the arcades on the left, known as the Staircase of Marble or the Queen's Staircase.

The visitor is greeted on the threshold by a portrait of Louis XIV., a fine bust of him as a young man, by Warin. To the left, on the ground-floor, is the entrance to the rooms of the Dauphine and Dauphin, where a fine Museum of the eighteenth century has lately been installed, to which we shall return. At the present moment we must ascend the staircase built by Mansart in 1681. In a niche on the landing are a group of cupids in gilded lead, supporting an escutcheon bearing the King's monogram, with

torches and doves. Above the doors and in the corresponding corners are bas-reliefs of children and sphinxes, the gilded metal of which they are made being a mixture of lead and tin. The doorway opening on to the loggia, and the painted views facing it, date only from 1701. This staircase always gave access to the rooms of the King and Queen. The Hall of the King's Guards opens on the loggia mentioned above; the entrance to the Hall of the Queen's Guards is to the right, on the landing.

This magnificent hall, the first room of the Queen's suite, was built at the same time as the staircase, and is decorated with the same valuable marble; it also contains bas-reliefs of gilded metal, and the pictures are framed in the same metal. The ceiling was painted, by Noël Coypel, with quaint figures, dressed in the fashions of the period when this part of the Palace was built. The works of art that are gathered in this first room are of various dates. Among them are pictures of the family of the Grand-Dauphin, Louis XIV.'s son, and the Duchesse de Bourgogne, wife of Louis XIV.'s grandson and mother of Louis XV., a charming portrait by Santerre. The sculpture comprises some admirable busts of princesses of the eighteenth century, including one of Queen Marie Antoinette, an official portrait by Leconte. This bust stands beside the door, where the Queen's

Guards were cut down and left for dead, at the time of the invasion of the Palace by the crowd of insurgents, at break of day, on October 6, 1789.

The crowd, who were seeking the Queen with the intention of killing her, did not know the way into her rooms, and this closed door was not entered. The National Guards were soon on the spot, and lost no time in driving the bloodthirsty mob down the marble staircase by way of which they had just invaded the Palace. It is well known that two of the bodyguard, who had defended this staircase, were captured by the crowd and had their heads cut off; and theirs were the heads that were carried on pikes beside the royal carriage, when the King and his family were taken back to Paris by the populace on that same day.

These tragic memories recall the last days passed by the French Monarchy at Versailles. We shall find other memories of this same day, to which we shall return in the proper place. The associations of the next salons are of a less melancholy character, for they are concerned with the brilliant epoch of the three reigns that followed each other amid the splendours of Versailles.

From the Hall of the Guards one passes into the Queen's antechamber, a large room where the King and Queen were in the habit of taking their meals *au grand couvert,* that is to say, in public, among the

members of their Court, who stood round the room during the royal repast. These ceremonies attracted many people, and every foreigner of distinction was eager to attend them; the public were permitted to walk through all the rooms, near the windows, but in the hall of the *grandcouvert* they were separated from the royal table by a line of Swiss Guards. Any one was allowed to walk by in this way, provided he were decently dressed; and nothing shows more plainly than this custom that the King of France, in spite of the absolutism of his power, was always in close communication with his subjects.

The walls are covered with pictures of the time of Louis XIV., which are cartoons of the tapestry hangings produced by the royal manufactory of the Gobelins, and represent episodes of Louis XIV.'s reign. It is intended to replace these cartoons by the original tapestries, which were formerly here; and this work of renewing the former appearance of these apartments has already been begun in the next room and in the King's suite, and will restore the original harmony between the decoration of the walls and that of the ceiling. In this room the ceiling is painted by Vignon and is dedicated to Mars: the central panel is an old repliqua of Le Brun's picture *The Family of Darius at the Feet of Alexander.*

The west room was the great Reception-room of

ROYAL COURT WITH STATUE OF LOUIS XIV.

the Queen, who here held her large audiences. The ceiling represents Mercury as the beneficent god of the Arts and Sciences. The gilded stucco of the ceiling was renewed under Louis XVI., as was also the panelling of the room. In accordance with the plan of restoration that is being followed, three pieces of Gobelin tapestry have just been replaced here, from the series called "The History of the King": the *Coronation of Louis XIV.;* the *Renewal of the Alliance with the Swiss Cantons* and the *Visit of Louis XIV. to the Gobelins Manufactory in* 1667. This last composition shows the workmen, under the direction of Charles Le Brun, presenting to the King the furniture of chased silver that was then being made for Versailles, where it remained for some time.

The Queen's bedroom, which comes next in order, is an admirable specimen and type of the decorative art of Louis XV.'s day, though it has unhappily lost, through Louis Philippe's depredations, two fine mirrors with carved frames, as well as the panels of gilded wood that surrounded them. But we may form a mental image of the original rich effect, with the help of the mirror that still survives between the windows, the frames of the doors, and the beautiful friezes painted by Natoire and De Troy, representing respectively "Youth and Virtue presenting two Princesses to France" (the birth of Louis XV.'s elder

daughters), and "Glory taking possession of the Children of France" (in which the young Dauphin figures with his sisters).

The wood-carvings, which represent the most delicate floral subjects, are by Jacques Verberckt, the most skilful carver of his day, who in 1738 completed this rich series for Queen Marie Leczinska. The ceiling is of the same date, and in it are fixed four paintings in grey by Boucher, representing the four principal virtues of Queens: Fidelity, Charity, Prudence, and Generosity. The eagles at the corners of the ceiling were added to represent the Eagle of Austria when the Archduchess Marie Antoinette took possession of this room as Dauphine of France, soon after her marriage.

This room, the furniture of which, while it was always magnificent, was renewed several times to keep pace with successive changes of taste, was occupied in turn by the Queens of France and, when there was no Queen, by the Dauphines. It was used by the wife of Louis XIV., Marie Thérèse of Austria, who died in it in 1683, by the Dauphine "of Bavaria," the Duchesse de Bourgogne, and Queen Marie Leczinska, who used it from 1725 to 1768 and died in it. It was finally the bedroom of Marie Antoinette, Dauphine and Queen, until 1789.

It was here that the Queen's toilet took place every

morning, in the presence of the ladies of the Court. The alcove was separated from the rest of the room by a gilt balustrade, and on each side of the bed were two doors—still existing—which gave access to the private rooms in the royal suite, called the *Cabinets de la Reine.*

On the morning of October 6, 1789, Marie Antoinette was awakened by the cries and threats of the huge crowd under her windows, in the garden, and soon afterwards heard the noise upon her staircase of the invasion of the Palace. She hastily pulled on a petticoat, and followed by the woman-of-the-bed-chamber who was on duty for the night, she hurriedly escaped by the door on the left side of her bed, and rushed for safety to the rooms of the King, her husband, where we shall soon recall the end of this dramatic scene.

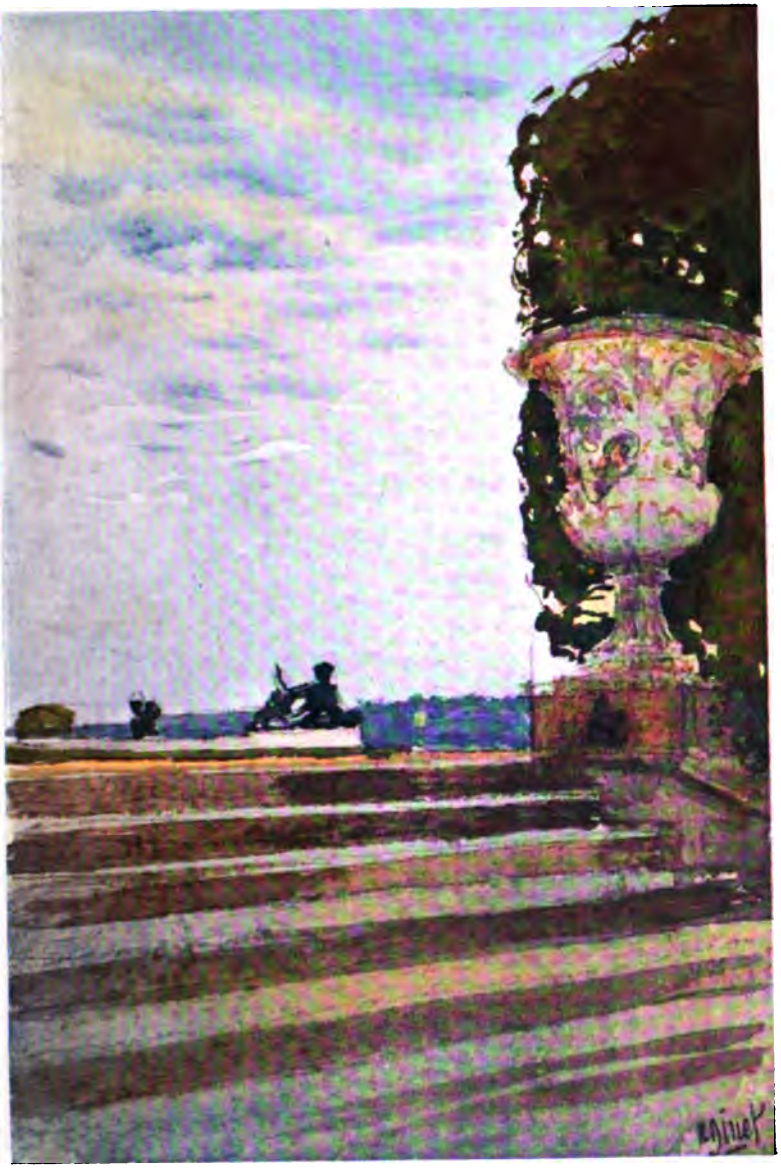
Nearly all the princes and princesses of the House of France were born in this room. Their birth, in accordance with a very ancient rule of etiquette, always took place in public, in order that every Frenchman might be secure from doubt as to the birth of his future sovereign. This custom, as may well be imagined, was extremely unpleasant, and even danderous, for the mother. On one of these occasions Marie Antoinette was surrounded by so many people in this room that she was nearly stifled for want of

air. Every chink of the windows was closely stopped up, and it was the vigorous Louis XVI. who, with his own hands, tore them open to air the room.

Two portraits of the Queens who occupied this room for the longest time are hung upon the wall. Nather has depicted Marie Leczinska in 1748, reading a book of devotion in the familiar attitude that was most agreeable to this good and studious princess. Marie Antoinette is represented by Madame Vigée-Lebrun, in 1787, in the same attitude; but the coquettish head-dress and rich garments of the lovable and light-hearted sovereign mark the contrast between the natures of these two Queens.

The view upon which one looks out from the windows of the Queen's suite gives one a first general idea of the beautiful gardens of Versailles; the rooms face south; the flower-garden that lies under the balcony still shows the original design of Le Nôtre; beyond it, lower down, is the orangery, then the sheet of water called the Pièce des Suisses, and on the horizon are the dark woods of Satory.

We should now visit the charming rooms originally built for the Duchesse de Bourgogne, rearranged by Marie Leczinska, and entirely renewed and redecorated to suit the taste of Marie Antionette. In the little salon whose corners are cut off, which is known as the *méridienne,* the carving of the wood-



THE STEPS OF LATONA

work is absolutely perfect. The foliage and rose buds grouped upon the panels are similar to the design in chased and gilded copper that is fastened upon the transparent glass of the two doors. Close at hand is the library, painted in gold, yellow, and green, which contained the Queen's books—books that she did not read, however, for she was reproached by her mother, the Empress Marie Thérèse, for her lack of taste for reading, as showing a trifling and frivolous mind. In another library, adjoining the little bathroom, one may see the casket of painted silk which held the layette presented by the City of Paris for the use of the Dauphine born in 1781.

The great Cabinet de la Reine was the room in which the Queen spent the greater part of her days; her favourite furniture, her knick-knacks and miniatures, were all here; it was here that she gave her private audiences and received her own special circle, the Duchesse de Polignac and her friends, the Comte d'Artois, M. de Bezenval, M. de Coigny, and Count Fersen. Later on she arranged that her children should come to her here, by a private staircase, in order that she might take part in their education.

In this salon, where so many memories of the Queen's happy days come crowding into our minds, there is a bust of her in the porcelain called *Biscuit de Sèvres,* after Pajou. In the lines and subjects of

the carved panels upon the walls we may see the Empire style of decoration already fully developed. There is here a tastefully arranged niche, entirely composed of looking-glasses; and it is said—quite wrongly—that Marie Antionette was surprised and horrified, on her arrival at Versailles, to see, in the angle of this mirrored niche, an ill-omened vision of herself, without a head. There is no foundation for the story, for the whole scheme of decoration dates from the second part of the reign. It is but one of many legends which have been given an air of truth by modern romantic writers on the history of the unhappy Queen.

We enter now the Salon de la Paix, where we are again recalled to the memory of Louis XIV. in the most famous and the best preserved part of the Palace. This salon opens into the celebrated Galerie des Glaces, at the further end of which there is a room of the same shape called the Salon de la Guerre. The whole of this was built by Mansart, and the paintings were the work of Charles Le Brun and his pupils between the years 1679 and 1684. On the ceiling of the Salon de la Paix are the allegories that gave the room its name, and the bronze trophies that are fastened to the marble are also of agricultural and peaceful subjects. The picture on the mantelpiece was added in the eighteenth century. It is by Le-

moyne, and represents Louis XV. giving peace to France, while he himself is being presented with his two first children, the twin daughters who were the earnest of future offspring. The salon was then part of the suite of the Queen, who gave concerts there, in which the performers were the musicians of the King's chapel. Later on Marie Antoinette used it as a card-room, and it was here that enormous sums were lost at lansquenet and other games of chance by the nobles and ladies of the Court. The Salon de la Paix was at that time separated from the gallery by bars of painted wood, the fastenings of which may still be seen.

The great Galerie des Glaces, together with the salons are of very great length; the gallery alone is 73 metres long, by 10½ wide, by 13 high. It is lighted by seventeen large windows in marble arcades, to which correspond seventeen imitation arcades filled with 306 bevelled mirrors mounted on copper frames. These mirrors, which Louis XIV. ordered from Venice, were, both on account of their size and their number, extremely magnificent for that date; they reflected the light dazzlingly, while the nearly white marble, contrasting with the coloured marble, completed the marvellous effect.

Some large mauve pilasters are surmounted by capitals in gilded metal of a new style of architecture

invented by Le Brun, in which the fleur-de-lys figures together with the sun and the Gallic cock. The trophies of gilded metal, and the twelve groups of arms in chased copper that are fastened upon the marble at the height of the eye, were designed and cast by the most skilful artists, and harmonise delightfully with the marbles, with the festoons of gilded metal that surround the arcades of the mirrors, and with the cornice of gilded stucco that carries on the golden effect along the whole magnificent gallery.

The eye is then attracted towards the paintings of the vaulted roof, which is the largest painted surface existing in France, recalling, while it surpasses them, the most famous specimens of Italy. This immense undertaking was carried out by Le Brun, supported by the enthusiasm of the King his master, who called him his "chief painter." He first made rough drawings, and then highly finished sketches, of all the subjects, which were to represent allegorically the history and triumphs of the reign. The King's glory had as yet suffered no diminution, and it was the climax of the supremacy of France that the painter had to represent. The double picture that occupies the centre contrasts the magnificence of the powers that surrounded France with the moment when the King, at the end of his mother's regency, began to reign independently. The small compositions tell

THE BASIN OF LATONA

the story of the first part of the reign, till the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle; the larger ones represent in allegorical form the episodes of the period of war up to the peace of Nimègue, from 1671 to 1678. Especially conspicuous are the preparations for the war against Holland, the crossing of the Rhine, the taking of Maëstricht, and the conquest of Franche Comté. Every group and figure has some allegorical significance, in accordance with the custom of the time. For instance, it is easy to understand the symbolism of the arches at the end of the gallery, where the formation of the coalition against the King is contrasted with the destruction of that coalition by means of his victories. Above the door opening into the Salon de la Guerre is painted the alliance of Germany and Spain with Holland (1672); above the door of the Salon de la Paix, Holland is seen vanquished, separating from her allies (1678).

If Le Brun had worked more slowly it would have been impossible for him to go on painting victories, for the glory of the reign soon began to decline. But in the meantime the King was everywhere represented in his glorious youth, resembling a Roman Emperor with his golden armour, purple mantle, and bare arms and legs, and always recognisable among the gods and goddesses by his splendid brown peruke.

Le Brun's work, indeed, consists entirely of this

superabundance of allusion and symbolism, which would very soon become wearisome when once one had appreciated its ingenuity. The lasting charm of the whole effect is secured by the absolute harmony of the decorative scheme, than which it is impossible to imagine anything richer. All the various tones of gold and copper are blended. everywhere with the most brilliant colours. Noble figures, nearly always in couples, beautiful only on account of their lines and their effects of contrast, live and move in the midst of the painted architecture they support. Virile caryatides holding up gilded entablatures, naked little sprites playing among garlands and escutcheons, winged Victories waving flags and hanging up trophies—this is the kind of fanciful population that is interposed between the spectator and the grand allegorical scenes, and prepares his mind to understand them.

It is impossible to form any adequate idea of the splendour that this gallery and the salons that surround it presented in Louis XIV.'s time, unless one is able to picture the magnificent furniture that was made on purpose for their adornment. Two large carpets of a light colour from the Savonnerie covered the parquet floor, while the windows were furnished with curtains of white damask, embroidered with the King's monogram in gold. In the evening the mir-

rors reflected the candles of the fourteen crystal and silver chandeliers that hung from the ceiling. All the furniture was of enamel and chased silver—tables large and small, stools, cressets and girandoles, candelabra and chandeliers—and the numerous orange-trees that stood along the marble walls were in marvellous tubs of chased silver. This collection was the work of the most skilful silversmiths, but unhappily it was not long in existence, for the misfortunes of war obliged the King to send all these incomparable masterpieces to the Mint to be melted down. We can form some idea of them from the old pictures and tapestry in which some of them are depicted. The furniture that replaced them was made of gilded wood of delicate workmanship, but it also has disappeared.

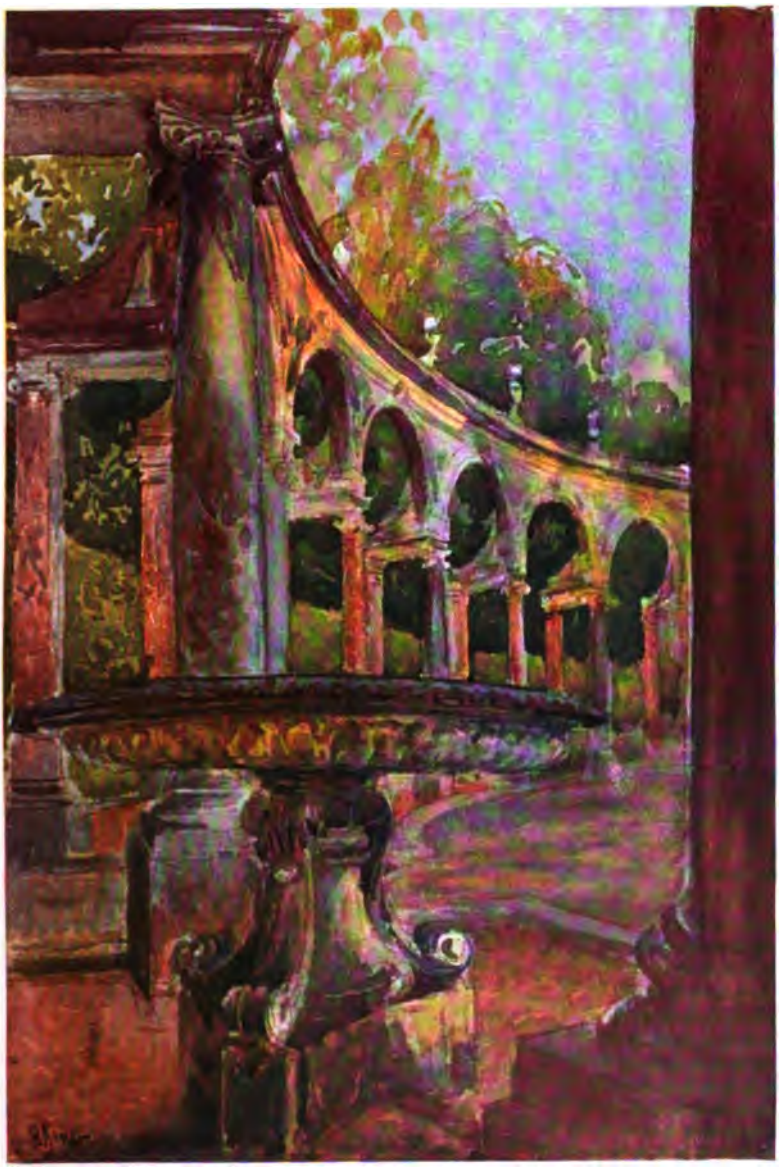
One's pleasure in this gallery is doubled by the view from the windows and balconies. One looks straight down the very centre of the gardens. In front of the Château are the two great basins of the Parterre d'Eau with their bronze statues, and beyond them the slopes of turf lead the eye to the distant lines of the Grand Canal. We have here a foretaste of the beauty of the gardens, and of the bronze and marble figures that adorn them everywhere. But it is only when we see the glittering waters rising high into the air from the basins on every side that we understand

the full significance of this harmonious scheme. That is indeed a magnificent sight!

We will now leave this great suite of rooms—to which we shall return later—and pass on into the royal apartments. It is convenient to visit them at this point, and it will take us some time to do so, since they are associated with all the principal memories of the life of the Monarchy.

The first glass door opens into a large room decorated with gilded woodwork, which is none other than the famous ante-room known as the *Œil-de-Bœuf*, so often alluded to in chronicles of the departed Court. This salon takes its name from a peculiarity in its construction. At each end of the roof is a window, of which one is blind, while the other overlooks a little yard. They are both of the oval shape that French architects call a bull's-eye. The room was only built in 1701, before which date the space was occupied by two rooms. On the south side there is an ante-room called the Salon des Bassano, on account of the numerous pictures by the Venetian master Jacope Bassano that hung above the doors and in the panels; on the north is the King's Bedroom, which he occupied until the year 1701.

It was in this first room that Molière fulfilled the functions of *valet-de-chambre tapissier* to the King, for this was the title under which the celebrated



THE GROVE OF THE COLONNADE

comic poet undertook the duty of making Louis XIV.'s bed. It was a duty he fulfilled very willingly, for by its means he was brought near to the master's person, and it was an important matter to him to be able to entertain the King with his comedies. In this way he obtained permission to perform his famous comedy *Tartufe,* of which the first Acts were given in an abridged form at Versailles, in spite of the opposition of the devout faction.

In this first bedroom Louis XIV. was operated on for fistula on November 18, 1686. This was a notable event in the history of the Court, and much admiration was evoked by the patience with which the King bore the whole operation without uttering a word of complaint.

At the present day, the King's room having been slightly prolonged, the *Œil-de-Bœuf* serves it for an ante-chamber. The most striking part of the decorations in this room is its frieze, with its bas-reliefs of gilded stucco, which represent children chasing birds, taming wild animals, playing with weapons, and dancing. This frieze, which is mainly the work of Hardy and Van Clève, is of the most incomparable grace and delicacy. The visitor should not forget to look up and examine it carefully. It is a good example of the special taste of the day, which gave to the figures of children an important place in dec-

orative art; a taste which Louis XIV. expressed when he desired his painters and sculptors to "put childhood everywhere."

Among the pictures of the royal family that are fitted into the panelling is one by Nocret representing Louis XIV.'s family in 1670. The object of the painter was to depict Olympus, and each individual represents a god or goddess. The King appears as Apollo crowned with laurels; the Queen-Mother as Cybele; the young Queen as Juno; Monsieur as the Dawn of Day, under the morning star; and Madame (Henrietta of England) as Spring. The Queen of England, Madame's mother, represents Iris, holding a trident in her hand and presenting the produce of the sea; and the Dauphin is depicted as Cupid holding a torch. All the princesses of the house of Bourbon have their distinctive attributes, and all the portraits in this curious picture—so characteristic of the times—are good likenesses.

On the chimney-piece stands the finest bust that was ever taken of Louis XIV. He is represented in armour, with the bearing of a warrior and in the full height of his strength. This piece of sculpture is signed Coyzevox and dated 1682, and is therefore contemporary with the final establishment of the Court at Versailles.

Two narrow doorways open into the first ante-

room, which communicates in its turn with the Hall of the Guards, the room by which the King's private suite is approached. This hall opens upon the marble staircase of which we have already spoken. The two chimney-pieces of these rooms are preserved as they were, but all the rest is modernised and turned into part of the Museum. In the ante-chamber the table was laid when the King ate his meals publicly in his own rooms, and supper and dinner were served here cermoniously. Every Monday morning a particular table was covered with a green velvet cloth, upon which all who had petitions to present came and placed them. The King seated himself in an arm-chair, received from a secretary a list of these petitions, inspected the various documents, and with his own hand made a note of the minister to which each should be sent.

From the *Œil-de-Bœuf* we pass into the room that became the King's bedroom in 1701, before which date it was a salon. This is the central point of the Palace, and in some respects the central point of the French Monarchy. All the affairs of the nation converged in this room, where the ceremonies of the King's *lever* and *coucher* took place every day, where he gave audiences to ambassadors and to the Pope's nuncio, and where he dined *au petit couvert,* that is to say, alone, on a little square table in front of the

central window. Many historical events are associated with this room, one of the most important being the solemn proclamation of the Duc d'Anjou, Louis XIV.'s grandson, as King of Spain, under the name of Philippe V. (November 16, 1700). In the royal chamber, too, Louis XV. received the remonstrances of the Parliament, and gave all his important audiences. In Louis XVI.'s time the most famous audience was the reception of the Deputies of the States General on May 2, 1789.

And with what interest we recall, as the most important of all, the events that took place on September 1, 1715! This was the day on which Louis XIV. died, in a bed that stood on the same spot as the one that we see to-day. Four days earlier the King had sent for the little Dauphin, who was about to become Louis XV., and had said to him: "Do not follow the bad example that I have given you in the matter of war: I often entered upon it too lightly and continued it from vanity. Do not imitate me, but be pacific, and let your chief occupation be the relief of your subjects." The little prince melted into tears, as did all who were present. The King gave advice to each, and when his courtiers by his wish approached the bedside, he thanked them for their faithful services, and begged them to remember that union is the strength of the State. He said to Madame de Main-

THE GATEWAY OF THE PALACE, AND THE GRAND STABLES

tenon: "I have always been told that it is difficult to die; but I who am on the point of experiencing that much-dreaded moment, do not find it difficult." Having seen in the mirrors that two of his pages-of-the-bedchamber were in tears, he said to them: "Why are you crying? Did you think that I was immortal?" After twenty days of illness he died at the age of seventy-seven, having given a fine example of Christian courage and repentance, at the end of a life that had not always been edifying.

The decorations of the room are very much as they were at the time of Louis XIV.'s death: the mirrors, the woodwork, the large bas-relief representing France seated on a pile of arms with figures of Fame on each side of her, and the bar of gilded wood that enclosed the King's alcove, are all old, and in their original places. The same cannot be said for the furniture, which is in the style of Louis XIV.'s time, but is not the same that was formerly in the room. The bed, notably, was remade in Louis Philippe's day, with fragments of tapestry taken from an old bed of the King's. The State-counterpane of lace is also of royal origin. It was made about the year 1670, and the pattern includes the monograms of the King and of Queen Marie Thérèse, as well as the shields of all the families allied with the House of France. This is one of the largest pieces of lace in existence. It is

wrongly said to be the work of the young ladies at Saint-Cyr, but that school did not exist when this marvellous piece of French lace was made.

Among the works of art in this room two portraits claim our attention: the marble bust by Coyzevox of the young Duchesse de Bourgogne, from whose grace and charm was derived the happiness of the last years of Louis XIV., and the profile in wax of the King himself at the age of sixty-eight years, by Antoine Benoit. This celebrated worker in wax was in possession of one of his Majesty's own perukes. He has strikingly shown the haughty and imperious character of the monarch, while accentuating the effects of age. Our only means of forming any complete idea of the King is to compare the realism of this old man's head with the idealised portrait carved by Coyzevox in marble, which we saw in another room.

Louis XV. occupied this room, like his great grandfather, until the year 1738. As it was a difficult room to heat, and the King was apt to catch cold in it, he had a smaller and more convenient room made beyond it for him to sleep in. But every night he lay down in the State bed and went through all the etiquette of the *coucher;* then, when the last courtier had retired, he left the room in a dressing-gown, by the door on the right side of the bed, and proceeded to

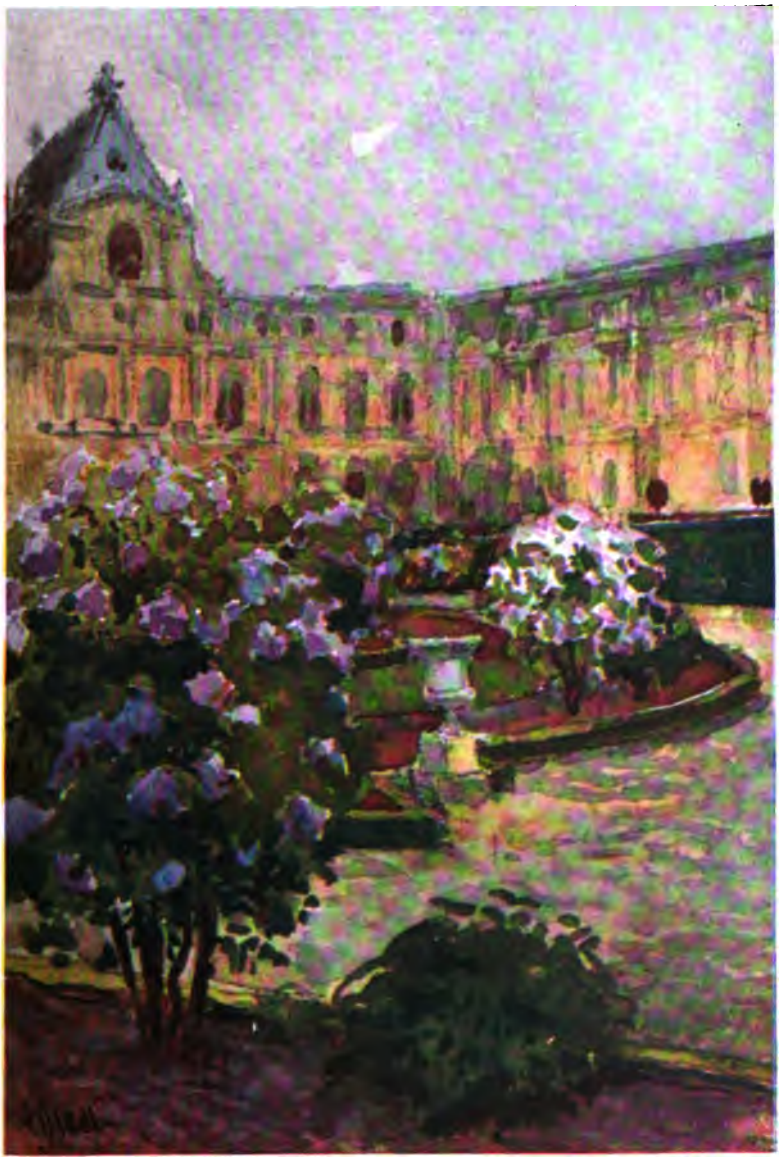
his real bedroom. He returned in the morning and lay down again in the bed, where the ceremony of the *lever* took place, followed by that of the toilet. This fantastic ceremonial was kept up by Louis XVI.

No one was allowed to pass the balustrade of the royal alcove; a *valet de chambre* of the Inner Rooms guarded the bed all day. When the ladies of the Court, and even the Princess of the Blood, entered the King's chambers, they made a deep curtsey before his Majesty's bed.

Those who are interested in the memories of the French Revolution will look with emotion upon the balcony of the King's room. On October 6, 1789, when the people of Paris invaded the Palace, and crowded, with threats, and with arms in their hands, into the Marble Court beneath the windows of the royal apartments, some of the courtiers were stationed here, with General Lafayette. The latter went to fetch the King, and showed him, on this balcony, to the people. Then, in her turn, the Queen was demanded by the populace, who were clamouring for her death. She appeared with her two children; but the crowd cried "No children!" and with a gesture full of dignity and courage Marie Antoinette put her two children behind her, and turned to face the muskets that were pointed at her, certain that her last hour had come. Her courageous bearing impressed

the insurgents, who, with one of those sudden changes characteristic of French crowds, always ready to respond to bravery, cried: *"Vive le Roi! Vive la Reine!* Let us take them to Paris!" Louis XVI. was then obliged to promise to go off with his people at once. Preparations were hastily made, and a few hours afterwards the royal family, with the mob surrounding their carriages, went on their way to Paris along the avenue that is opposite to the Palace, to which they were fated never to return.

Next to the King's bedroom, in all the royal châteaux, was the room known as the King's Cabinet, or the Cabinet of the Council. At Versailles the Cabinet covers the space occupied by Louis XIV.'s former Cabinet and by his peruke-room, which used to be filled with a quantity of wigs, from among which the King chose one every day. Louis XV. made the existing King's Cabinet, in which large panels in the grand style surround a very beautiful mirror and a red marble chimney-piece ornamented with bronzes, one of the most remarkable in the Palace. The whole dates from 1755, and the wood-carving is by the decorative artist Rousseau, whose principal work this is. The carvings represent the attributes of royalty, the sceptre, and the "hand of justice," and the children personify War, Peace and Commerce. These symbols recall the fact that the



THE NORTHERN PARTERRE AND THE CHAPEL

King dealt with all the affairs of the kingdom in this place, for here he worked every day with one of his ministers, and here he held his Council. It was here that, during three reigns, the fate of all France was decided, and, to a certain extent, the fate of Europe as well.

Memories that are less important, though not less interesting from the point of view of descriptive history, are connected with the King's Cabinet. It was here that he gave special audiences, and received ladies who came to be presented to him. A lady could not be admitted to the Court, or received in the King's carriages, until she had been presented. She would arrive at the Palace in a splendid equipage and in full dress, and would ascend the marble staircase accompanied by the lady who was to present her and escorted by a number, more or less large, of her friends; she would pass through the hall of the guards, the first ante-room, the *Œil-de-Bœuf,* and the King's room; then, on the threshold of the Cabinet, she would make her first curtsey to the King. At the third curtsey the King would sometimes speak to the lady who was being presented; and there was always a large number of courtiers who had the curiosity to be present at these agitating presentations. The most celebrated of these was the presentation of Madame du Barry in 1769; never had the ante-rooms and the

Cabinets been filled with so many curious spectators, and never had a prettier woman been presented, nor one who wore more magnificent ornaments, for on the previous day the King had sent her a hundred thousand pounds' worth of diamonds.

The door of looking-glass that opened into the Grand Gallery was always kept closely shut; it was never opened except for the King to pass through from his private apartments to the chapel, on ceremonious occasions. The door of his private apartments or *cabinets* is opposite the chimney-piece, and leads into rooms not open to the public, all of which were built and decorated for King Louis XV. The first is the bedroom that he occupied, as we have seen, after the year 1738.

The alcove was surrounded by a gilded balustrade, and opened into a charming *cabinet de garde robe,* which has been preserved. On the walls of this alcove there have lately been hung three pieces of Gobelin tapestry from the precious series with the golden background, which represents the story of Don Quixote, and is in the same decorative style as the rooms. The original decorations above the doors have been replaced by portraits of the daughters of Louis XV., the Princesses Elizabeth, Henrietta, and Adelaïde.

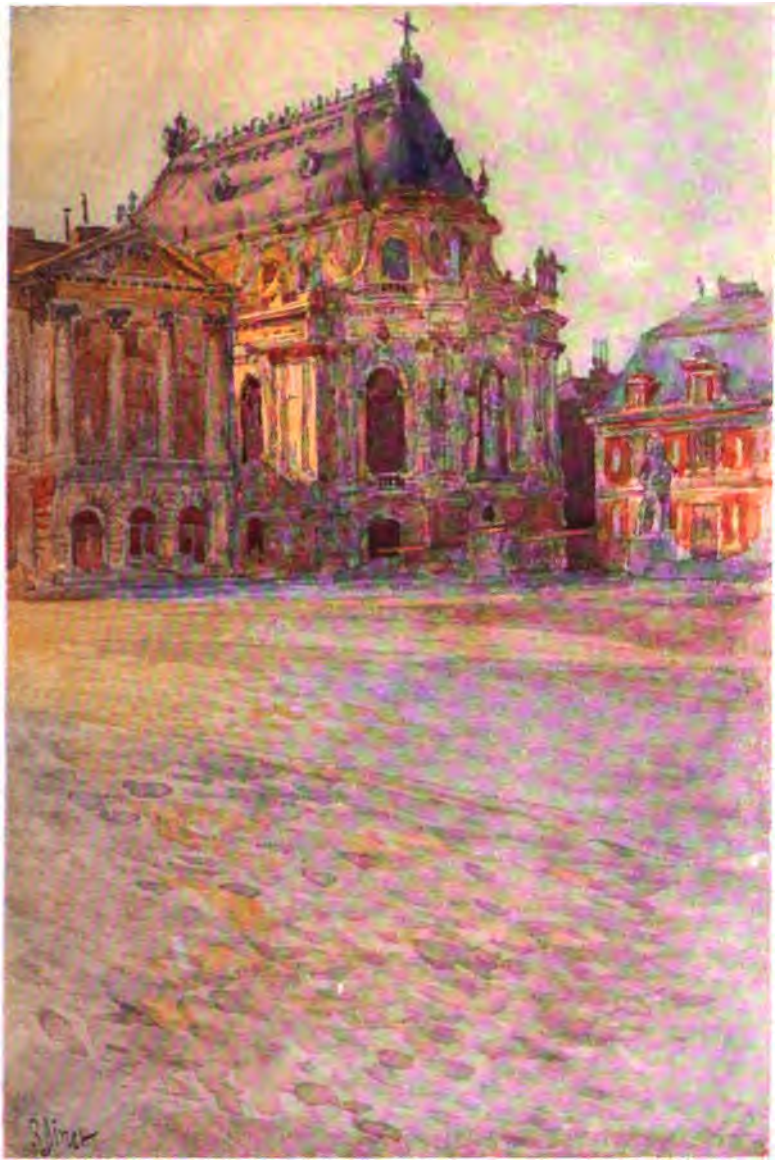
It was in this room, too, on May 10, 1774, that

Louis XV. died. A few days earlier he had been brought back, ill, from Trianon. Contrary to his habits he had followed the hunt in a carriage, and in the evening he complained to Madame du Barry of feeling very unwell. The royal family insisted upon his returning to Versailles, and three days later it became evident that he was suffering from small-pox. It was the most terrible scourge of the day; "Madame Infante," Louis XV.'s eldest daughter, had died of it; and upon her arrival in France, Madame, wife of the Comte de Provence, had been attacked by it, though the nature of her illness had been hidden from the King in the fear of alarming him. On May 3, as Louis XV. was examining his hands, he cried out: "It is small-pox! Yes—it is small-pox!" No one answered him, but he was well aware of the truth. When, in the evening, Madame du Barry came to see him, he said to her that she must go away, for fear of making a scandal. As the Comtesse left the room she fainted away. The favourite went to the Duchesse d'Aiguillon at Rueil, where she was kept informed of the invalid's condition, which every day became more serious. On May 7, Louis asked for his confessor; and two days later he received Extreme Unction.

He had been laid upon his camp-bed. Surpliced priests, holding lighted tapers, surrounded his bed

upon their knees. The King's mouth was open, and he was breathing heavily; his features were swollen and seemed almost black; he was stifling. The many people who were present stood round, and listened in consternation to the prayers of the Bishop of Senlis; from time to time a chaplain held up a great crucifix before the dying man's eyes. In the next room the ministers could be heard carrying on a discussion with great bitterness, while the people without were crowding into the Marble Court to hear the proclamation of the King's death. It was not until the next day, however—Saturday, May 10—that he breathed his last after a terrible death-agony, at three o'clock in the afternoon. The moment that the monarch's eyes were closed the Duc de Bouillon, the Grand Chamberlain, advanced to the barrier that divided the *Œil-de-Bœuf* in two, and said to the waiting courtiers: "Gentlemen, the King is dead!"

This was also the bedroom of Louis XVI. Of the incidents of this period we will recall only one—one that appeals especially to our emotions. The whole royal family gathered here on the tragic morning of October 6. The King was surrounded by the Comte and Comtesse de Provence, the Comte and Comtesse d'Artois, Madame Elizabeth, and the Queen, who had come hither by way of the private passages, Madame de Tourzel, the governess of the children of



THE CHAPEL

France, had hastily brought the Dauphin, with his sister Madame Royale. Here is the window from behind whose curtains the Queen watched, during long hours, the threatening movements of the crowd in the Marble Court, while she stroked the Dauphin's fair hair; for the child, having been taken from his bed without breakfast, and understanding nothing of what was taking place was continuously murmuring: "Mamma, I am hungry!" And here is the door of the Council Room, through which Lafayette entered when he came to fetch their Majesties, first one and then the other, to show them to the people from the balcony of which we have already spoken, and which is visible from here.

The Salon de la Pendule, into which we now pass, is the first room in the King's private suite, and takes its name from the clock by Passemant and Dauthiau, which is a masterpiece of mechanism and of the clockmaker's art. The bronzes are signed by Caffieri, the great artist in this genre of whom this is perhaps the most important production, and who may be so thoroughly studied in London through his works in the Wallace collection. The style harmonises with the ornamentation of the mirrors and of the woodwork, which is by Verberckt. The other works of art in this room are a bust of Louis XV. as a child by Coyzevox, and a bronze model by Bouchardon of

an equestrian statue of Louis XV., which once stood in the square in Paris now known as the Place de la Concorde, but formerly called the Place Louis XV. This famous statue was destroyed during the Revolution.

On five tables of stucco, supported by brackets of carved wood, are depicted scenes in the Grand Park of Versailles, and in the forests of Marly, St. Germain, Compiègne and Fontainebleau. It was on these tables that Louis XV. and Louis XVI. gave to the Master of the Royal Hounds and his lieutenant their instructions with regard to the chase.

The memory of the royal hunting expeditions is also associated with the next room, which is called the Cabinet des Chiens. The friezes of stucco round the ceiling represent scenes in the hunting of the stag and the wild boar. The King kept his favourite dogs here in special niches. This room served as an antechamber to the entrance to the little staircase. This staircase is protected by a wrought-iron railing with the King's monogram, and leads to the small suite of rooms formerly used by Louis XV., including his library, his workshop, his small kitchens and his still-room. A part of this suite was arranged for the accommodation, near the King, of his last favourite, Madame la Comtesse du Barry.

It was by this staircase that the King left his rooms

every day when he went out. On January 5, 1757, he had just descended these stairs and was on the point of stepping into his carriage at the corner of the Royal Court, when he was struck with a dagger by the murderer Damiens. The King, who thought his wound was mortal, was carried up the same staircase to his room, surrounded by his agitated courtiers.

The Cabinet des Chiens opens into Louis XV.'s dining-hall, which was also that of Louis XVI., and was sometimes used for intimate gatherings of the royal family.

The eight pictures on Sèvres porcelain, which have been brought back to the place they formerly occupied, represent scenes from the hunts of Louis XVI., and are similar in design to the great compositions of Oudry, which were carried out in Gobelin tapestry, and depicted the hunts of Louis XV. This is the most valuable collection in existence of pictures painted at Sèvres. The French windows open on a balcony that encircles the Cour des Cerfs. This inner court, so called on account of the stags' heads in plaster with which it was formerly decorated, was connected with all the rooms of the King's suite, and was overlooked by no others.

The Salon at the corner of the Marble Court and the Royal Court was the King's private sitting-room. The carvings here are in the best style of the period

of Louis XV. From the balcony the King watched the funeral procession of Madame de Pompadour disappearing along the Avenue de Paris, on April 16, 1764. It was nearly dark, and the weather was extremely bad; but the King stood bareheaded in the storm until the last torches of the procession had vanished. It has been recorded by eye-witnesses that his eyes were overflowing with tears, and he said to those who were with him: "Alas! I have lost one who has been my friend for twenty years, and this is the only mark of respect that I can pay her!" This well-authenticated saying is very different from the heartless words put into the King's mouth by various imaginative historians, and too often repeated.

One of the most important scenes in the celebrated affair of the necklace, in Louis XVI.'s reign, was enacted here. On August 15, 1785, the King and Queen summoned the Cardinal de Rohan to appear before them, at the very moment when, as Grand Almoner of France, he was about to celebrate at Versailles the solemn festival of the Assumption. He was accused of having made use of the Queen's signature as a means of obtaining the diamond necklace. As a matter of fact, he had been duped by Madame de La Motte, who had taken advantage of his credulity to use him as her tool, and had appropriated the jewel herself. As Marie Antoinette, who de-

THE "DYING GAUL"

tested the cardinal, had no doubt of his guilt, she attacked him with terrible violence in the King's presence; and the cardinal, who was alarmed, and, moreover, understood nothing of the matter, for he imagined he had been acting on a secret order from the Queen, did not know what to answer. The King promptly gave orders for his arrest to the captain of the guard, and as he left the royal apartments he was taken prisoner in his pontifical robes in the presence of the Court, which had assembled for the ceremony, and was led under a strong guard to the Bastille. This was the beginning of the famous scandal. Marie Antoinette was as innocent in the affair as the cardinal, but none the less the disgrace of it fell upon the unfortunate Queen.

Beyond this room, in a part of the Palace that is not open to the public, are the rooms of Madame Adelaïde, which the King had had made near his own, on account of his affectionate and fatherly feeling for the most intelligent of the daughters who remained to him. One of the rooms was turned into a library for Louis XVI. In another there are some extremely rich bas-reliefs representing symbols of the chase and of the art of fishing, and groups of musical instruments. This is still called Madame Adelaïde's music-room.

After having been brought thus closely in touch

with the memories of the eighteenth century, we return to the Galerie des Glaces, and entering the Salon de la Guerre, we find ourselves once more surrounded by the splendour of Louis XIV.'s Court.

The Salon de la Guerre was built at the same time as the Gallery, and is decorated with paintings by Charles Le Brun, the King's Chief Painter. On the ceiling France is represented surrounded by figures of Victory bearing laurels, of supporting tablets inscribed with the triumphs of Turenne over the Germans. The subjects of the four divisions of the roof are Germany, Holland, and Spain—all vanquished —and the goddess Bellona in wrath. The large bas-relief on the mantel-piece represents the King on horseback, after a victory. It is by Coyzevox, and is made of stucco; for though it was intended to reproduce it in marble the design was never carried out. The bronze trophies fastened upon the marble are as remarkable as those in the Gallery and in the Salon de la Paix. Six busts of Roman emperors in coloured marble, with heads of porphyry, stand upon pedestals, which are also coloured. These are the busts of Italian workmanship that were bequeathed by Cardinal Mazarin to Louis XIV.

The King's State Apartments begin here. In these Louis XIV. gathered together, on certain days, the brilliant Court described in the letters of Madame

de Sévigné and in the memoirs of the time. There were rooms devoted to music, to dancing, to card-playing, and to refreshment. These rooms are still decorated with the magnificent marbles originally placed in them, and they also have the doors of carved and gilded wood that were made by the first wood-carver of the family of Caffieri.

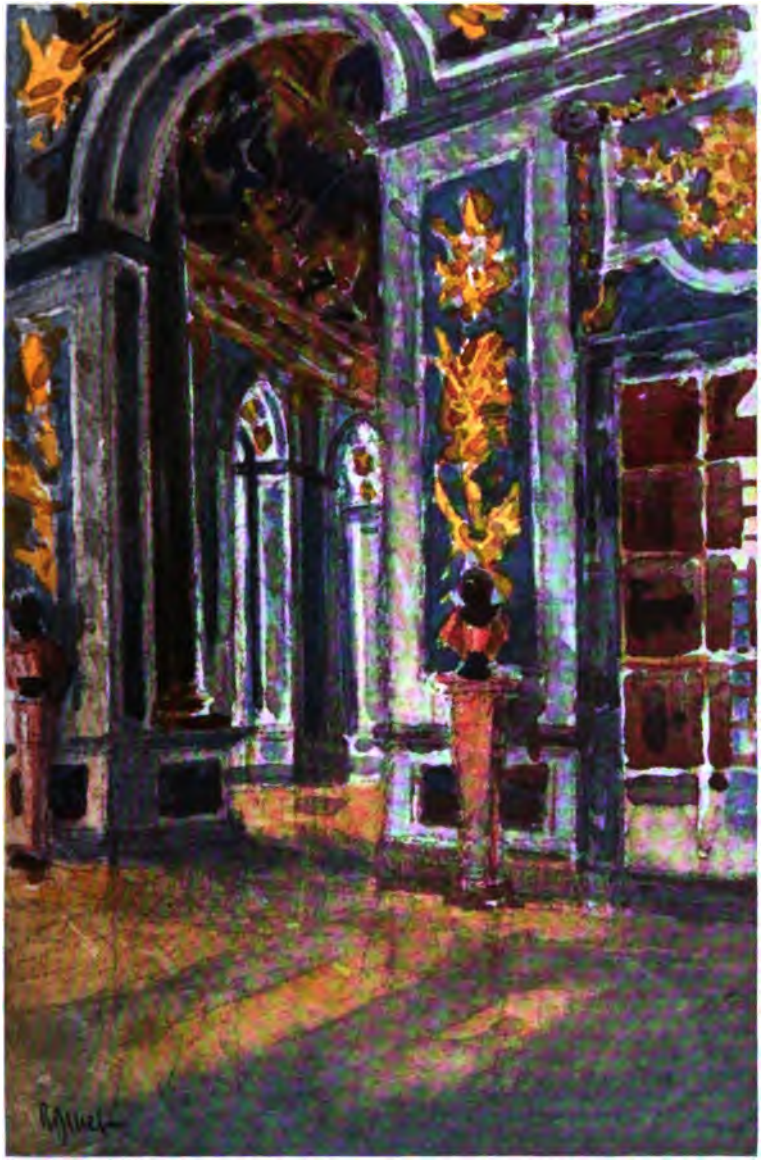
Each room was dedicated to one of the planets, in allusion to the King's emblem, the Sun, which we may see at every turn, both painted and carved. The fine, well-preserved ceilings, with their compartments of gilded stucco in the Italian style, represent, in each salon, the planet to which it is dedicated. The first, painted by Delafosse, is that of the Hall of Apollo, and the god of light is surrounded by the seasons and the twelve months of the year. It is intended to replace the old tapestries forming part of the series woven at the manufactory of the Gobelins, and called the History of King Louis XIV., a process of restitution that has happily been already begun in the next salon, enabling us to see the original decoration of these rooms, which were formerly hung with the most beautiful tapestry belonging to the Crown.

The tapestry that has been restored to the Hall of Mercury represents episodes in the campaign of Louis XIV. in Flanders, after paintings by Le Brun

and Van der Meulen. The ceiling, painted by J. B. de Champaigne, depicts Mercury in a car drawn by two cocks, surrounded by the figures of Vigilance, Skill, Science, Industry, and Music. Here, as in the Gallery, there was some magnificent furniture of silver; and as the room contained a State bed, there was a silver balustrade surrounding it, of which the cost was a hundred and forty thousand *livres.*

The Hall of Mars, of which the central part of the ceiling is by Audran, was sometimes used as a ball-room, and sometimes as a cardroom. For a long time there were, to the right and left of the mantelpiece, two seats of marble, upon which sat the musicians who used to play the airs of Lulli, Couperin, or Rameau, at the Court dances.

In the Hall of Diana there was a large billiard-table, which was used on the days of the *grand appartement,* or great receptions. This was a game that Louis XIV. enjoyed very much, because he played it well. The ladies watched the game seated on platforms covered with Persian carpet. There were four silver tubs containing orange-trees, and four large silver chandeliers hung from the ceiling. The painting on this ceiling is by Blanchard, and represents Diana surrounded by Slumber and Dreams. The whole hall is faced with marble, with large ornaments of chased and gilded copper.



THE SALON OF PEACE

The portraits of Louis XIV. by Riguad, and of his wife Marie Thérèse by Beaubrun, are sunk into the decoration of the room; but the most important work of art is the bust of Louis XIV. as a young man, which was done by the Cavalier Bernini, at the time when the famous Italian artist was staying at the Court of France, where he was received with every mark of honour. This bust, although of skilful workmanship, is nevertheless very inferior to the French busts of the same period.

In the Hall of Venus, as in the preceding room, the mural decoration and the marbles of the time of Louis XIV. have been preserved intact. The painting, moreover, is so arranged as to give the effect of carrying on the lines of the architecture. On the ceiling, by Houasse, we see Venus crowned by the Graces, and receiving from Vulcan the arms that she bade him forge for her. In the niche there is still standing the statue that was originally ordered to fill it, in which Warin has represented Louis XIV. as a Roman Emperor.

The whole hall is panelled with great mosaics composed of the most beautiful marbles, and it is noticeable that the workmanship in these was of so high an order that there are no cracks between the pieces, after about two centuries and a half. Especial care was devoted to the appearance of this hall, which for-

merly, by one of the doors at the end, opened upon the Ambassadors' Staircase, the principal approach to the Palace.

In the Hall of Abundance there is nothing remarkable but the ceiling, on which is painted the Abundance or Splendour of royalty. On the painted balustrade are depicted various vases and objects of value formerly belonging to the King. They formed part of the collection of curiosities that was kept in the room close at hand. This room was altered in Louis XV.'s time, and now contains nothing but an interesting series of military drawings by Van Blarenberghe.

Another door opens, and we find ourselves in a huge hall, lighted by six large windows, and entirely panelled with marble and decorated with gilded carvings of great power. The enormous marble chimney-piece by Autin is loaded with bronzes, in the middle of which is a head of Hercules, covered with the lion's skin. We are in the famous Hall of Hercules, and the ceiling, which measures 18 metres 50, by 17 metres, represents the apotheosis of Hercules and his reception among the gods of Olympus. This painting, which is the work of Louis XV.'s first painter Lemoyne, and is his masterpiece, was completed in the six years between 1729 and 1736. It is the largest surface that has ever been covered by a

single composition in France. It is said that the painter was greatly complimented by the King and Court when his work, so long hidden by scaffolding, was disclosed to view; but his expenses in colours and accessories had been so high that the honorarium of ten thousand écus did not cover them. He had spent twenty-four thousand francs in ultramarine alone! The unfortunate artist, not daring to put forward any claim, killed himself in despair.

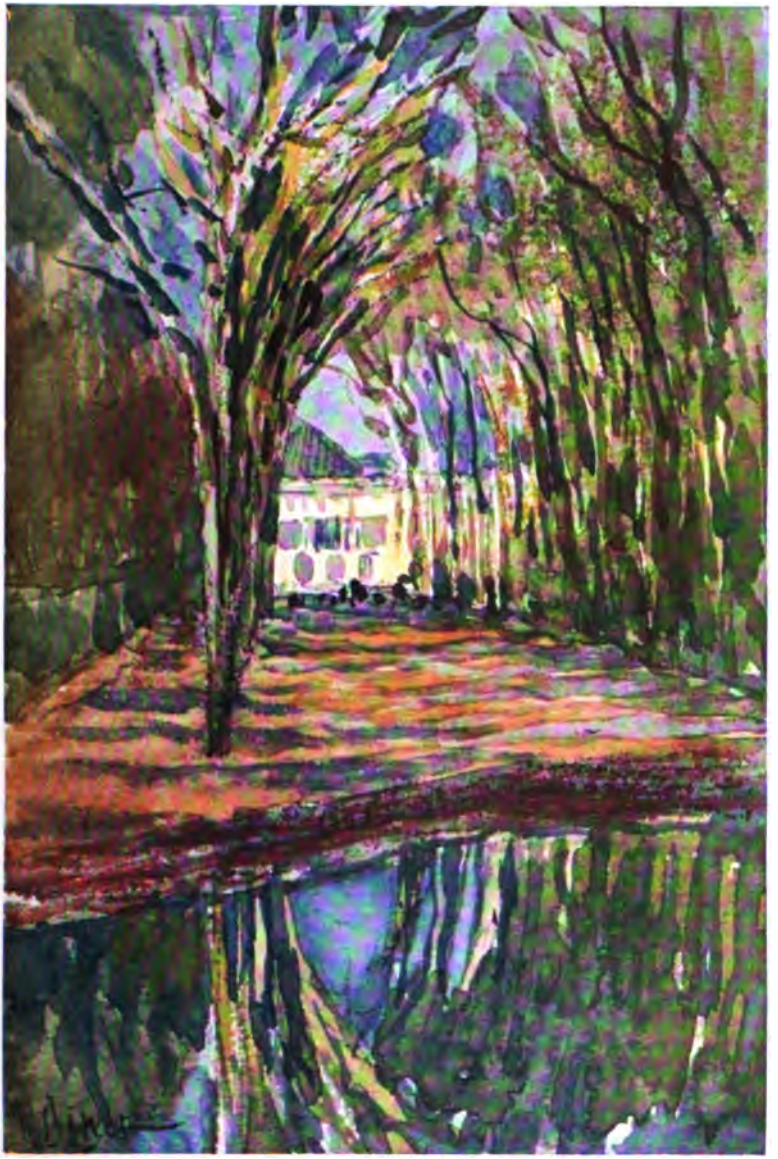
In the Hall of Hercules there are now two pictures other than those that were originally placed there; a portrait by Mignard above the chimney-piece, of Louis XIV. on horseback; and facing it *The Crossing of the Rhine,* an old design for Gobelin tapestry copied in the time of Louis Philippe, which is very effective in its present position. But we cannot help deploring the loss of the picture that was formerly here, the *Feast at the House of Simon the Pharisee,* by Paul Veronese, which is now in the Salon Carré in the Louvre. For this great picture, presented to Louis XIV. by the Republic of Venice, the carver Vassé made the large carved frame that is still to be seen.

This room, which was the State ballroom of Louis XV.'s Court, was last used as a theatre when the Emperor and Empress of Russia stayed here for a day in 1896. The style of its architecture is that of

Louis XIV.'s time, in spite of the fact that it was built at a later date. As in Mansart's day, marble is the principal material used for decoration; but this was the last time that it was employed at Versailles in large quantities.

There is a very striking contrast between this hall and the large room that is next to it, which is very sober in its dignity, and is remarkable for its unique combination of white stone with the gold of the decorated doors. This unexpected simplicity fills the mind with serious thoughts, and prepares it for the chastened magnificence of the chapel. Upon the central doors, the leaves of which are richly ornamented with the royal monogram, and lily branches, and the arms of France, are locks which are real triumphs in the art of chasing. When the leaves of this door are opened, giving access to the royal gallery, the eye is dazzled by the shining depths of the white nave.

The chapel is built in two stories. On the ground-floor, which is covered with a pavement of rich marble mosaic, square piers support a row of arches, above which are the great bays of the galleries, marked by fluted columns supporting the roof. A banister of violet marble, resting on a gilt railing, encircles all the galleries. Through the large windows, whose white panes are merely framed in



THE WALK OF CERES

coloured glass, the whole of this fabric of white stone is flooded with light.

The paintings of the vaulted roof are all in fresco. In the centre Antoine Coypel has depicted the Eternal Father in His Glory, surrounded by groups of angels carrying the instruments of the Passion. It is an unfortunate imitation of the most overloaded ceilings in the churches of the Italian decadence. Jouvenet, in his *Descent of the Holy Ghost,* above the King's Gallery, and Delafosse, who has filled the apse with a *Resurrection of Jesus Christ,* are less obtrusive. The other paintings are not worth mentioning, especially as we cannot give too much admiration to the decorative sculpture, which is a real triumph of French art.

Everywhere there are bas-reliefs of angels, of trophies, of graceful and ingenious symbols relating to religious subjects, covering the whole surface of the stone in a wealth of happy design. All the sculptors of the day, notably Van-Clève and the two brothers Coustou, contributed to this scheme of decoration, which is unique on account of its extent as well as of its perfection. Every ornament in the chapel should be studied in detail. It will be observed, by the way, that the royal fleur-de-lys was nearly everywhere defaced during the revolutionary periods.

This building, the most beautiful and harmonious church of its day, arose between the years 1699 and 1710, in accordance with the designs of Mansart, and under the superintendence of his brother-in-law and successor, Robert de Cotte. It was the last addition to the Versailles of Louis XIV. In 1715, five years after it was opened, was celebrated the solemn funeral service of the monarch whom France, in the days of his triumphs, had named the *Grand Roi.*

The large gallery was reserved for the King and the royal family. Louis XIV. and Madame de Maintenon occupied the corners of this gallery, where, the better to carry on their devotions, they were isolated in a niche with a grating of gilded wood. The rest of the Court sat in the side galleries, and the King's Choir, both instrumentalists and singers, were all together in the organ-loft. On the days of solemn festivals the King heard mass at the foot of the altar, on a throne prepared for the purpose.

The funeral services of all the princes and princesses of the House of France were celebrated in this chapel until the year 1789, as were also all the marriages of the royal family, and all those in which the King and Queen honoured the bride and bridegroom by signing the register. Among the royal marriages we may here picture the one that took place in 1770, between Louis, Dauphin of France, and Marie Antoi-

nette, Archduchess of Austria, which was celebrated with unparalleled splendour. Neither of them, however, was brought here for the rites of burial, for they were buried in the common trench in Paris, in the Cemetery of the Madeleine, after suffering upon the scaffold.

The long stone gallery, containing casts of busts and historical tombs, leads to the rooms of the modern Museum. Before the Revolution there were doors opening into it from the fine suites of rooms inhabited by the Court, the windows of which looked over the gardens. The King and his Court followed this gallery to the end of the wings in order to reach the Palace theatre. This great hall, which did not exist in Louis XIV.'s day, was built by Gabriel between the years 1753 and 1770. It was a long and difficult work, and was barely finished in time for the festivities connected with the wedding of the Dauphin, afterwards Louis XVI. It is the most beautiful theatre imaginable, with its happy proportions, its rich ornamentation, and the bas-reliefs placed by Pajou along the boxes and on the walls of the *foyer*. The woodwork here was formerly painted to imitate verd-antique, which harmonised with the blue velvet of the hangings. In the time of Louis Philippe it was all repainted in a reddish colour, and the establishment here of the National Assembly in 1871

completed the disfigurement of this marvel of French architecture. Although now devoted to the use of the French Senate it is still worthy of a visit, for it was the keystone of the old life of the Court of France, in which the theatre, and more especially the opera, filled so large a place.

If the visitor desires to seek out the other memories that are associated with the old rooms, there is nothing left for him to see but those of the ground floor, the suites formerly used, in Louis XV.'s time, by the Dauphin and Dauphine, and now occupied by the Museum. We shall find these memories here and there as we examine the various works of art contained in the Museum; but these rooms have not, like those of the first floor, kept the actual appearance of their original state, having been too much disfigured in the days of Louis Philippe.

Chapter Three

THE MUSEUM OF FRENCH HISTORY

WHEN the Revolution of 1789 broke out, half the population of the town of Versailles disappeared as though by magic; all who were connected with the Court had followed the King to Paris, or had emigrated to various foreign countries. The tradesmen who supplied the Château were ruined, and the town was threatened with the removal from the Palace of all the works of art that adorned it. Soon, in 1793, the sale of the royal effects took place, and throughout a whole year the vast rooms of the Palace were transformed into shops, for the disposal of the furniture, china, jewels, and objects of every description, with which Versailles and the royal dwellings of the neighbourhood were equipped. It was at that time that various merchants and foreign collectors became possessed, for next to nothing, of admirable specimens of the royal furniture of France, of which a great number are to be found in England.

There was a risk of the Palace being included in the general sale of the ancient possessions of the French Crown, in which case the demesne would have been divided and destroyed forever. Owing to the good offices of certain intelligent men Versailles was preserved for the nation, and the government of the Directory began to establish a museum of pictures of the French School in the State apartments. During the Consulate the old apartments in the wings were turned into an annexe to the Hôtel des Invalides, and were inhabited by hundreds of veterans, to the great detriment of the Palace. As for the gardens, they went altogether to ruin. Napoleon repaired the water-conduits, and not only thought of restoring the buildings, but even of carrying out Louis XV.'s plan of general reconstruction. He even dreamt of living there.

On the restoration of the Monarchy the idea arose of replacing Versailles in its original position as a royal residence; Louis XVIII., in the intention of living there, caused the pavilion corresponding to Gabriel's Wing to be finished, and the Chapel to be restored. But it was not till King Louis Philippe came to the throne that the fate of Versailles was finally decided, and it was consecrated, in the form of a Museum, to the glories and memories of France. It will be of interest to record here, in the words of a

contemporary witness, the prevalling idea in this great work, and the way it was carried out:

"To consecrate the venerable dwelling of Louis XIV. to all the glories of France, and to unite within its precincts all the great memories of our history, such was the scheme personally conceived by His Majesty. But at that time the Palace of Versailles contained neither pictures nor statues; the ceilings alone had been restored. The King gave orders that the depôts of the Crown and the royal residences should be searched for all pictures, statues, busts, or bas-reliefs representing events or personages celebrated in our annals, as well as all works of art having any historical interest. Works of which the greater number were remarkable, but which had long been forgotten in the storerooms of the Louvre and in the garrets of the Gobelins, were dragged from the dust; others, scattered here and there in various palaces, were gathered together at Versailles; and finally the same care was employed in collecting all that had been produced by modern painting and sculpture. These various collections, however, were very far from sufficing for the accomplishment of the scheme conceived by His Majesty; for neither every great man nor yet every great event in our history was represented in this collection drawn from different epochs. The King supplied this want by

ordering from our most distinguished artists a considerable number of pictures, statues, and busts, which were destined to complete the magnificent gathering of all that is most illustrious in the history of France."

This transformation of Versailles, which added greatly to the popularity of the Monarchy of 1830, was the personal achievement of Louis Philippe. He ordered pictures commemorating episodes in French history from a whole legion of artists, together with busts and statues of the principal personages figuring in that history; and he generously paid for all the work from his private purse.

This part of his achievement, the least interesting to-day, was completed by a much more interesting collection of ancient documents, brought together from all parts; of portraits from the ancient royal collections, and canvases ordered by the Emperor Napoleon to commemorate the events of his reign; and of pictures belonging to various families, who were glad to offer them to Louis Philippe in their pride at seeing the portraits of their ancestors figuring in the new Museum. It is from this enormous mass of materials, all of which have an important bearing either upon Art or upon History, that the new administration of the Museum has drawn the chief elements in the interesting and instructive

STATUE OF GENERAL HOCHE

rooms, of which so many have been opened during the last ten years.

In the establishment of the Museum, between the years 1833 and 1837, it was thought necessary to sacrifice a large number of decorative objects, such as wood-carvings, bronzes, and marble chimney-pieces, with which the wings and the ground-floor of the body of the Palace were filled. The losses under this head can never be repaired. It would have been possible, with a little feeling for the things of the past, to preserve a much greater number; but no one at that time cared for the art of Louis XIV. and Louis XV., which had quite gone out of fashion.

The Museum was solemnly inaugurated on June 10, 1837, in the presence of the royal family and of all the great governmental bodies. The opening was celebrated by grand fêtes, and from that day forward the Museum, which has been from time to time enriched by more modern memories, has been one of the most popular in France. The present reorganisation, while respecting the original idea, has brought into special prominence the objects of special merit, and has shown that the Museum contains the elements, not only of a great historical picture gallery for the people, but also of a collection of works of art that are historically interesting, and are

worthy on account of their beauty to figure honourably among the admirable and ancient decorations of Versailles.

The most ancient series of representations of French history must be looked for on the second floor of the north wing. They begin with some portraits of the fifteenth century, in the middle of which is a picture on wood representing Joan of Arc in armour, and the archangel St. Michael at the feet of the Virgin; it is said to have been painted during the captivity of the Maid of Orleans. Some little panels carefully painted by Corneille de Lyon, and the school of the Clouets, represent the princes, ladies, and famous personages at the Count of the House of Valois. Next, with Henry IV., come the portraits of the Bourbons and their contemporaries. Near Louis XIII. and Anne of Austria are fourteen curious paintings from the Château de Richelieu, depicting the military campaigns of the great Cardinal, whose portrait was painted by Philippe de Champaigne.

When we reach the period of Louis XIV. the series of works of art are multiplied to an incredible degree; they are to be found in various places beyond the second-floor rooms mentioned above, and in the State Apartments of the first floor, and finally in the rooms formerly used by Madame de Main-

tenon. In the State Apartments, especially, the portraits of the *Roi Soleil* are very numerous. He is represented in statue, bust, or bas-relief, by Warin, Bernini, and Coyzevox; and on canvas by Le Brun, Mignard, Rigaud, and secondary painters. The *Grand Roi,* as was only right, filled the great rooms that were the products of his magnificence with presentments of himself.

In Madame de Maintenon's rooms, where the collection of pictures has recently been arranged, the most interesting portraits of the *grand siècle* are to be found. These rooms are facing the entrance to the Hall of the King's Guards, on the landing of the Marble Staircase, a situation of such honour that it shows, more than anything else, the exceptional place held at the Court by the Marquise de Maintenon, after the King had wedded her morganatically, the marriage being celebrated secretly in the private chapel of Versailles.

The portraits of *grandes dames* which have been brought together here are those of Madame la Marquise de Sévigné, who so well described the Court of Louis XIV.; of Louise de la Vallière and Madame de Montespan, who governed it; of Madame de Maintenon herself, by Mignard and by Ferdinand Elle, who has represented her full-length, seated in an arm-chair, with her niece Mademoiselle

d'Aubigné kneeling before her; of the Duchesse d'Orléans, Princess Palatine of Bavaria, who spoke so cruelly of Madame de Maintenon and of so many other people of the Court in her well-known letters; of Louis XIV.'s natural daughters' Mademoiselle de Blois, afterwards the wife of the Regent, and Mademoiselle de Nantes, afterwards Princesse de Condé.

We see here two delightful portraits of children by Mignard; the Comte de Toulouse represented as a pretty naked cupid, asleep upon a bed of blue silk with a red pillow; and the future Duchesse du Maine, Anne-Louise Bénédicte de Bourbon, sitting in a park blowing soap-bubbles. By Le Brun we have here a powerful study of the head of the Marshal de Turenne, and by Sebastien Bourdon a striking portrait of the superintendent Fouquet, as well known for his dissipation of the royal treasure as for his generous protection of artists. An excellent portrait-painter, Claude Lefebvre, has given us Colbert, the great Minister, and De Troy has painted the great architect Mansart. We must also notice the portrait of the sculptor Coyzevox by Allou, that of the painter Rigaud by Lebouteux, and that of Le Nôtre, the celebrated architect and gardener, by Maratta. All these countenances are very characteristic of their century. But the most interesting

THE KING'S GARDEN

pictures in the series of portraits are those we owe to the brush of Rigaud.

Hyacinthe Rigaud here shows himself a master in the majestic and decorative figures by which he so well interprets the spirit of his day. In 1702 he painted the great portrait of the Marquis de Dangeau, Louis XIV.'s historiographer, in the sumptuous costume of Grand Master of the Order of Saint Lazare. This is a velvet mantle of a reddish purple colour, sprinkled with fleurs-de-lys, and lined with green satin, beneath which appears the blue ribbon of the royal Order of the Holy Ghost. Swelling with pride under his immense black peruke this *grand seigneur* faithfully represents the pretensions of his class. Contrasted with this are the portraits of artists, in which Rigaud has represented the sculptor Desjardins, the two brothers Keller—the skilful founders of the King's cannon and of the statues of Versailles—and finally His Majesty's chief painter, Mignard, seated in an arm-chair with a cartoon upon his knees. The countenance of this old man, which was profoundly studied by the master, is unequalled in its penetration and intellectuality.

There are valuable illustrations here, in several contemporary pictures, of the anecdotal history of Louis XIV.'s Court. Van der Meulen has depicted the young King on horseback with the Queen near

the Château de Vincennes, and again near that of Fontainebleau. An anonymous picture represents him at the same period presiding over the assembly of jurists, who are drawing up, under his eyes, the regulations for the reform of the administration of justice. A view of the old Chapel of Versailles shows him receiving the oath of Dangeau, who is kneeling before him, as Grand Master of the Order of Saint Lazare. And a fine sketch by Coypel depicts Louis XIV. as an old man, giving audience to the Persian envoys, whom he received in the Galerie des Glaces: this was his last public audience, a few months before his death.

This series of historical and anecdotal scenes should be completed by the study of the cartoons of the Gobelin tapestries, and of the tapestries themselves, which have been distributed among the rooms, and are full of historical portraits and of costumes in the fashions of the day.

There is yet another series of paintings deserving special notice; namely, the collection of pictures by Cotelle, Pierre-Denis Martin and Jean-Baptiste Martin, Étienne and Gabriel Allegrain, and Van der Meulen, giving views of the château and groves of Versailles, Marly, Trianon, Clagny, Meudon, Saint-Cloud, Madrid, Fontainebleau, Chambord, Saint-Germain, and Vincennes. Several of the

royal châteaux are destroyed or altered. These old views of the groves of Versailles, with the fountains in their complete state, as seen by Louis XIV.'s contemporaries, form an interesting study for the visitor who is spending several days in the town and can compare them with the present condition of the same places.

The eighteenth-century paintings have been quite recently placed in the rooms of the ground-floor, formerly occupied by the Dauphine and Dauphin. They are entered at the foot of the Marble Staircase, and no sooner does one pass the threshold than one is conscious that this is the most attractive part of the collection. For it was during this period that the French genius showed the greatest amount of charm and developed all its special qualities, and that the faces represented were most characteristic of the national spirit. The whole society of the century is brought together in these pretty salons.

It is again the great portrait-painter Rigaud who greets us in the Hall of the Regency with a superb portrait of the young King Louis XV. in 1715, which faces Philippe d'Orléans, Regent of France, by Santerre, surrounded by the portraits of the princesses his daughters. It was the artist Belle who painted the little Infanta of Spain whom Louis XV. had had brought to Paris when quite a child, only

to be sent back later on to the King her father, as being too young to be married; and it was Belle, too, who painted Queen Marie Leczinska, the daughter of the ex-King of Poland. Largillière's portraits are also very remarkable, particularly those of the magistrates and of himself. The works of Louis Tocqué should be noted, especially the portrait of the poet Gresset and that of M. de Marigny, Director of Buildings to the King and brother of Madame de Pompadour.

In a fine salon we find, harmoniously and decoratively grouped together, the portraits of Louis XV.'s daughters, Mesdames de France, by Nattier. This painter, who has become the fashion, as he was in his own day, and who is so much sought after by amateurs at the present time, here exhibits a collection of unique works. All the conventional grace of the women of his day is made to live once more in the likenesses he has given us of the princesses whose specially appointed painter he was, the most exquisite being the portraits of Mesdames Victoire, Sophie, and Louise, painted in 1748, when they were being educated at the Abbey of Fontevrault in Anjou. Madame Louise, whom he has represented holding some flowers, in a most charming picture, was afterwards to enter the Carmelite Convent, leaving the pleasures of Versailles to submit herself to

CHURCH OF NOTRE DAME AT VERSAILLES

the most severe rule of the most austere monastic order existing in France.

Further on we see Madame Adelaïde and Madame Henriette as mythological goddesses, one as Diana, the other as Flora; and they are also depicted when older, in full Court dress, one singing and the other playing the bass-viol, for the favourite recreation of these princesses was music, their singing-master being Beaumarchais, author of the *Mariage de Figaro.*

We must not allow the charm of Nattier's pictures to make us indifferent to the merits of the other masters, such as Carle Van Loo, Louis-Michel Van Loo, Roslin the Swede, Louis Tocqué, and François Drouais, by whom there are here some interesting canvases and some portraits of famous men and women.

On the chimney-piece of the Dauphin's bedroom, which is ornamented with bronzes chased by Caffieri, there is a curious piece of tapestry from the Gobelins, reproducing the official portrait of Louis XV. The remains of decorations which are to be found in these rooms, having survived the destructive period of Louis Philippe, date from the time of the Dauphin, son of Louis XV. and father of Louis XVI. These apartments were occupied in the seventeenth century by the Dauphin, son of Louis

XIV., who is known in history by the name of the *Grand Dauphin,* to distinguish him from his son, the Duc de Bourgogne, who was living at the Court at the same time as himself. Nothing dating from the time of this prince is left in these rooms, where everything is in the style of the eighteenth century.

The reign of Louis XVI. is represented further on in a fresh series of portraits, among which are those of the King and his cousin the Duc d'Orléans, who became celebrated during the Revolution under the name of Philippe Egalité; those of the King's brothers, the Comte de Provence (afterwards Louis XVIII.), and the Comte d'Artois (Charles X.); and finally, those of Queen Marie Antoinette, by Madame Vigée-Lebrun. The most famous of these pictures is dated 1787, and represents the Queen surrounded by her three children; the little girl is Madame Royale, who was confined in the Temple during the Revolution and afterwards married her cousin the Duc d'Angoulême. The little boy who is standing up is the first Dauphin, who was born in 1781 and died in 1789: the child on Marie Antoinette's knees is the Duc de Normandie, who was born in 1785 and died in the Temple prison, under the name of Louis XVII., which was given to him by the royalists. This great picture has a touching effect upon us owing to these dramatic memories.

The sculptuary here is remarkable, and more especially the busts by Houdon, which represent Diderot, Voltaire, and Louis XVI. Some important pieces of furniture have also been placed here, such as Louis XVI.'s bureau, and Marie Antoinette's jewel-cupboard, which is remarkable for the beauty of its workmanship and for the variety of materials employed in its adornment.

No country, it would seem, has ever devoted so many pictures to the commemoration of the events in its history as France, since the time of the Napoleonic era. A large proportion of the canvases ordered by the Emperor to recall the civil and military episodes of the Consulate and the Empire have been placed in the Museum of Versailles. They are arranged according to their size, and form three distinct series, which should be studied together, although they are distributed in three different parts of the Palace. The largest pictures are on the ground-floor of the South wing, in the galleries known as those of the Empire. Especially noticeable are Thévenin's picture of the *Grande Armée* dragging its cannon through the snow over the Great St. Bernard Pass, and Girodet's painting of Napoleon receiving the keys of the town of Vienna.

The second series of pictures connected with Napoleon is on the first floor of the North wing, in the

rooms overlooking the park. For the sake of brevity we will not name them here, but will call especial attention to the third series, the most interesting of them all, which has lately been exposed to public view on the second floor of the South wing, reached by a staircase which is a continuation of the Grand Staircase of the Queen. Here we find the most interesting descriptive canvases and the series of historical portraits.

This collection opens with a room devoted to all the records of the French Revolution possessed by the Museum, which are curious enough. We see here authentic portraits of Mirabeau, Lafayette, Bailly, Condorcet, Robespierre, Madame Roland, and Charlotte Corday; the picture by David of the assassination of Marat in his bath, etc. The best picture, from an artistic point of view, is the *Federation Fête,* which is perhaps Hubert Robert's masterpiece. Here also is a bust of the young Louis XVII., which was in the Palace of the Tuileries, and was thrown out of the window when the mob invaded that Palace on August 10. This charming piece of sculpture was found by chance in 1816 in the possession of a shoemaker, who used it, it is said, for beating his leather. The nose having been broken, the head has been restored. Beside it is the portrait of Marie Antoinette in widow's dress, painted in the Temple

LOUIS XV.'S LIBRARY

prison, which contrasts strikingly with the brilliant portraits of the same Queen to be seen in other parts of the Château.

After these dramatic relics we see French society in the days of the Consulate, presided over by some fine pictures of the First Consul by Gros, David, etc. His bust by Corbet is the best that was done during his life. In the series of soldiers we must observe some very interesting drawings representing thirty generals of the Army of Egypt, drawn in crayons in Egypt itself by Dutertre. Pretty Madame Récamier seems to preside over the society of her day, represented by numerous portraits of writers, men of science, and statesmen. In the adjoining rooms are kept the sketches of the portraits executed by Baron Gérard, the prolific portrait painter, in which we are enabled to review, in the costumes of the day, the whole of the princely and diplomatic society of the first years of the nineteenth century. Many of these charming pictures are connected with the art of portraiture in England.

The whole of a large room and several small ones are reserved for the portraits, in painting and sculpture, of the family of Napoleon. The kings and princes, his brothers, and their wives and children, are grouped round the Emperor and his two wives, the Empress Josephine and the Empress Marie-

Louise, whom Gérard has depicted holding the little King of Rome. Further on there are pictures representing Napoleon distributing decorations to the artists; the entry of Napoleon and Marie-Louise into the Tuileries on the day of their marriage; and the whole series of marshals and great dignitaries of the Crown in their sumptuous costumes.

In this series of the second floor the military history of the Empire is only represented by the pictures of General Lejeune, who was Marshal Berthier's *aide-de-camp,* and took part in the principal campaigns. This officer, who was gifted with a very interesting sense of the picturesque, and made sketches every day in camp or on the field of battle, has contributed from his portfolios some paintings full of movement and life. Especially noticeable are the canvases representing the Battle of Marengo; the bivouac of Napoleon on the eve of the Battle of Austerlitz; the famous cavalry charge of the Polish lancers at Somo Sierra in Spain, etc.—scenes observed and experienced in such an intelligent way that they alone would suffice to give an idea of the mental processes of the *Grande Armée* and of the sentiments that animated it, as well as of the life it led when crossing Europe.

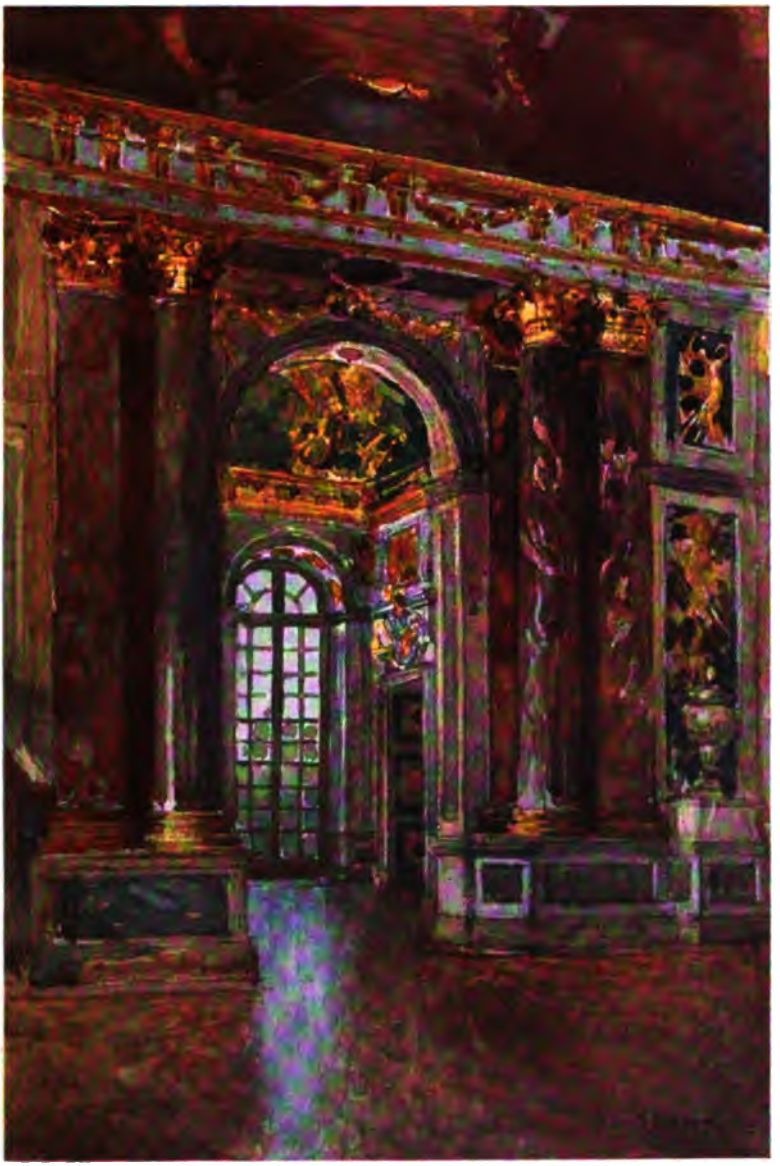
To this period, of which the French are justly proud, succeeds the pacific era of the Restoration:

round the peaceful effigies of Louis XVIII. and Charles X., and of the Duc and Duchesse de Berry, are grouped the other portraits of that date: a new series of little sketches by Gérard is close to the original pictures of the same master, and prompts us to draw instructive comparisons. There is a portrait of Gérard himself by Thomas Lawrence, of which the head only is finished.

The episodes of the civil war during the three days of July, 1830, represented here by several painters and notably by Horace Vernet, lead us to the history of the monarchy of the younger branch. Here we see, among the pictures of this period, many of which are concerned with the agreeable relations of France with England, a collection of all the portraits of Louis Philippe's family, by Winterhalter. The Duc d'Orléans, the King's eldest son, is painted by Ingres. Among Gérard's last pictures the portrait of Lamartine is noticeable. All the Parisian men of letters of the time, including Chateaubriand, Victor Hugo, Alexandre Dumas, etc., are depicted together on a canvas by Heim, representing a lecture in the *foyer* of the *Comédie Française*. The same artist (Heim) painted the Chamber of Deputies presenting the Duc d'Orléans (Louis Philippe) with the Act that called him to the throne in 1830; and the Declaration presented to the Duc d'Orléans

by the Chamber of Peers. The artist has filled his canvas with a large number of minutely observed portraits. Eugène Lami painted one of the most interesting pictures of the period, representing the boulevards of Paris as they appeared on the day of Fieschi's attempt on Louis Philippe's life, by means of an "infernal machine," to which many persons round the King fell victims. It is impossible to mention here all the interesting things there are to be seen on the spot.

The conquest of Algeria inspired a famous artist, Horace Vernet, with a series of popular pictures, which must be sought on the first floor of the North wing, in the neighbourhood of the Chapel. These "African rooms" are well known to the people, but they are, nevertheless, not unworthy of the attention of lovers of painting, for they vigorously and faithfully reproduce scenes studied on the spot. Well known above all are the three pictures dealing with the siege and assault of Constantine, and the immense canvas representing the taking of Smala or the camp of Abdel-Kader. The event took place on May 16, 1843, and the painting that represents it is one of the largest existing, for it measures more than twenty-one metres in width by a little less than five metres in height. In the centre the Duc d'Aumale, mounted on a white horse, is answer-



ARCHWAY IN THE GALERIE DES GLACES

ing the imploring Arabs with a reassuring gesture, while the African chasseurs whom he commands are galloping towards the enemy's tents, and reducing them to a state of disorder and dismay. The multiplicity of suggestive episodes and realistic details does not at all detract from the unity of this marvellously clever composition.

The second Empire, in its turn, ordered several official canvases to be painted in honour of its military successes. The Crimean expedition and the Italian campaign occupy a large room near the rooms of Horace Vernet. The crossing of the Alma by Pils, painted in full sunlight, is one of the most beautiful of modern military pictures; while Gustave Doré has represented the hand-to-hand conflict between the English and Russian regiments in the battle of Inkermann with real power. Yvon has painted three distinct pictures of the capture of the redoubt of Malakoff, an important episode in the siege of Sebastopol. Twenty-one topographical pictures show forth the complete history of that memorable siege, in which the troops of England and France were united.

The Italian campaign is less happily treated in the pictures representing Solferino and Magenta. The activity of France abroad is celebrated in a picture by Riou representing the fêtes in connec-

tion with the inauguration of the Suez Canal at Ismailia.

The elegance of Napoleon III.'s brilliant Court has never been better shown than in Gérôme's clever picture depicting the reception of the Siamese ambassadors by Napoleon III. at the Palace of Fontainebleau. The Emperor and the Empress Eugénie, surrounded by officers of the Court and ladies of the Palace, and with the Prince Imperial beside them, are receiving the homage of the Siamese, who are on their knees in their handsome yellow robes. Every individual, including the painter himself, is recognisable.

Hippolyte Flandrin's portrait of Napoleon III. is a masterpiece, and reproduces his troubled and thoughtful expression in a marvellous way. The portrait of the Empress Eugénie is only a copy of Winterhalter's picture, while the sumptuous one of the Princess Mathilde is an original work by Dubufe. Hébert and Flandrin painted the energetic figure of Prince Napoleon, whose wife, the Princess Clotilde, is represented by Hébert in a touching picture full of mystery.

Horace Vernet painted the portraits of Marshals Bosquet, MacMahon, and Canrobert, which are the best of the military series; while among the civilians the portraits of Emile Augier by Dubufe, and of

Victor Hugo and Thiers by Bonnat, are equally worthy of mention. The two last date from the first years of the Republic, as do also the portraits of General D'Aurelles de Paladine by Nélie Jacquemart (Madame Ed. André), of the dramatist Edouard Pailleron by Sargent, etc.

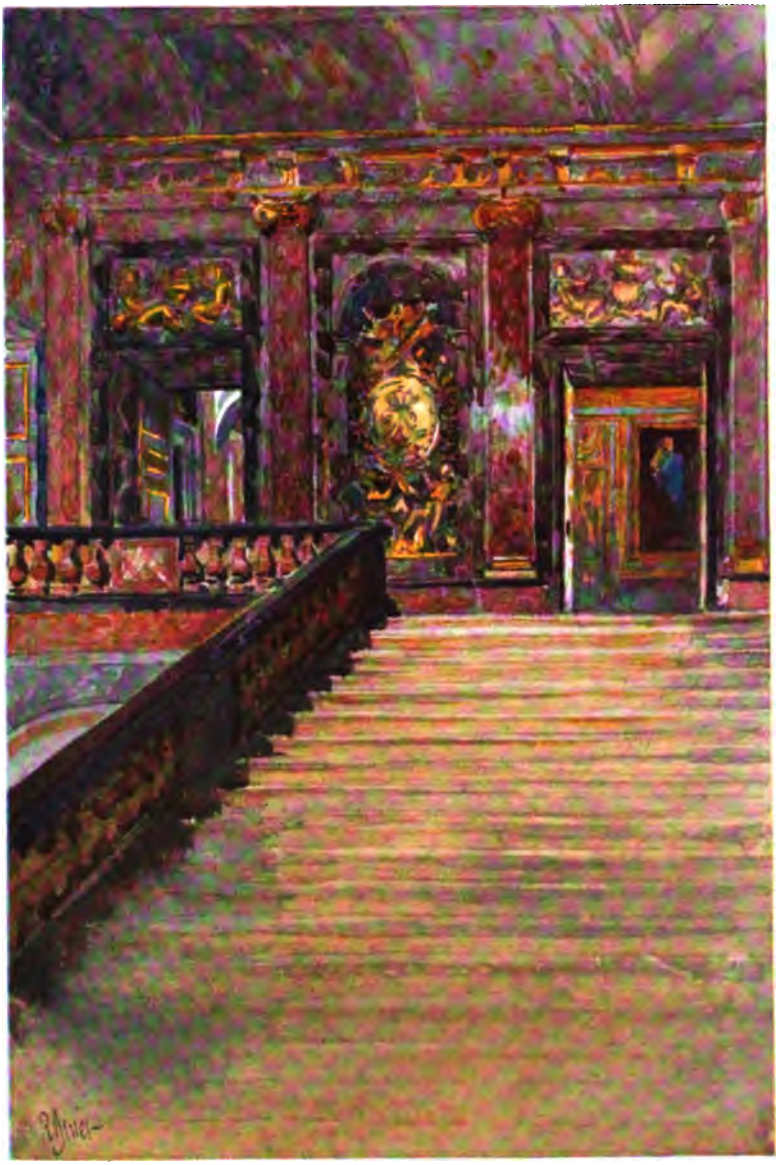
Let us glance rapidly at the most modern subjects of all, whose representations are still distributed provisionally in various parts of the great Museum. The Battle of Reichshoffen, by Aimé Morot, depicts for us very poignantly the heroic and murderous charge of the French cuirassiers at Morsbronn, which wrung from the King of Prussia, as he looked on at the sacrifice of so many regiments, the famous exclamation: *"Ah! les braves gens!"*

The siege of Paris is recalled in an episode of the Battle of Champigny painted by Alphonse de Neuville; and the melancholy symbol of the Franco-German War, remembered by the French nation as *the terrible year,* is furnished by Georges Bertrand's canvas, *Patrie.* Here we see a troop of cuirassiers in the twilight descending a muddy hill, and supporting in his saddle a dead officer, whose distorted fingers are clutching the flag upon his breast.

More recent events than these—represented as a rule on over-large canvases—are: The Celebration of the Centenary of the *États-généreaux* of 1789 at

Versailles, by Roll; the Distribution of Rewards at the Universal Exhibition of 1889, by Gervex; the same scene at the Exhibition of 1900, by Tattegrain; the Funeral of President Carnot at the Panthéon in Paris, by Georges Bertrand; two masterpieces by Edouard Detaille—the Funeral of Pasteur, and the Review at Châlons in honour of the Czar Nicolas II.; the reception of the girls of Paris by the Czar and Czarina at the inauguration of the Pont Alexandre, by Roll; the Centenary of Victor Hugo, in the Panthéon, by Chartran, etc.

The State, by ordering these pictures, has shown its intention of continuing to supply the Museum, without any break, with a graphic commentary on contemporary history. Later on these works will have a documentary value; but a large proportion of the public will continue to visit a section of the Museum to which we have not yet referred, although it contains the most popular pictures: those commemorating the History of France, painted for the most part by order of Louis Phillippe, in accordance with the didactic conception of his Museum. The public will always be interested in seeing the *Charlemagne Crossing the Alps* of Delaroche, the *Saint Louis* of Cabanel, and the pictures in the romantic style collected in the rooms known as the "rooms of the Crusades," which contain the shields of those old



THE MARBLE STAIRCASE

French families of which a member figured in the expeditions of the Christians to the East.

The most famous pictures of this nature are collected within the vast walls of the Gallery of Battles, which was constructed in the place of three storeys of rooms, and occupies the whole length of the South wing. The Gallery of Battles forms an epitome—a little artificial, perhaps, but not without a grandeur of its own—of the military glory of the nation; it is a kind of pantheon, with its busts and inscriptions in honour of the leaders of armies and generals who have lost their lives in fighting for France; and at the same time its great canvases form a military panorama, whose subjects extend from Tolbiac to Wagram, and show us Napoleon's soldiers as the direct descendants of those of Clovis.

The subjects taken from the Middle Ages, which are here treated in the romantic style of painting, serve only to increase our appreciation of the "Battle of Taillebourg," by Eugène Delocroix, the central point of the Gallery for lovers of art. The modern section, on the contrary, includes several interesting or famous works by Alaux, Devéria, Franque, etc.; two huge Gérards, "Henry IV.'s Entry into Paris," and the "Battle of Austerlitz"; two fine Couders, "Lawfeld" and "Yorktown"; Bouchot's "Zurich"; Philippoteaux's "Rivoli"; and finally, to

bring the glorious series to an end, Horace Vernet's three popular pictures of Napoleon, "Jena," "Friedland," and "Wagram."

This part of the Museum and those which, like it, are devoted to the popular instruction of the French nation, should not be visited during the course of the considerable alterations which are at this moment being carried out in the Historical Museum of Versailles. That Museum will soon have received its final form. It should be borne in mind that this is the largest collection of works of art that a nation has ever consecrated to memorials of its history.

Chapter Four

THE GARDEN OF VERSAILLES

THE grand architectural lines of the Palace of Versailles are continued in its gardens. It was the same mind that planned their arrangement, and one can detect in them the same thoughts and similar artistic feelings. Their air of grandeur and dignity corresponds closely with the magnificence of the Palace; their decoration is similar, and their history is identical.

It was the condensed genius of a whole race that created this formal and orderly miracle of flower-beds, sparkling water and marble; this harmonious geometrical figure, to which the sunlight has lent its own dazzling magic. This plan, so admirably conceived by Le Nôtre and so splendidly coloured by Nature, was the slow and careful work of several generations: it is of value for its own sake, as well as for that of the history of three reigns passed under the shade of its venerable trees, when its fêtes turned it into fairyland beside its fountains, and lovers

walked among its perfumed groves, and ladies in wide hoops trod in long procession on the turf of its paths, beside the pretty little carriages in which servants wheeled the King and the princesses. In these gardens—the most famous in the world—one may evoke endless memories of radiant days, and also of sad hours, as when in 1789, below the balconies of Marie Antoinette, the populace cried: "Death to the Austrian!"

To secure a really good idea of the splendid spectacle that is displayed in shady walks that lead to grassy glades, in luxuriant groves where fountains play, in distant views where the eye loses itself in wooded heights, one should stand quietly for a few moments, on a day of autumn or spring, on one of the balconies of the Galerie des Glaces, and look steadily at the vision that is spread before one's eyes.

Far away the mirror of the Grand Canal lies in the sunshine, which plays upon the metal of Apollo's Car, the shadows of the trees tremble on the undulating turf, the pale statues bend over the white paths, the bronzes supply a touch of gold, and the water quivers in the fountains; the whole landscape is wrapped in profound silence, a splendid and imposing mourning for the dead Monarchy.

Nowhere can one see Nature tamed more abso-

lutely than here. When Louis XIII. built this little château he laid out a hunting-park; the ground was marshy, and formed a circle bounded to right and left by rounded hills. Louis XIV. transformed the wild and deserted spot into this region of life and beauty, but we shall never know how much was spent in the way of will-power, labour, and money in raising all these terraces, the earth for which had all to be brought from elsewhere, and in strengthening the foundations and approaches of the great Palace. It stands up superbly, in all its whiteness and wealth of decoration, spreading out before the gardens the broken but symmetrical lines of its façade, which can be seen from afar. To right and left, as one faces the Palace, the Southern Parterre and the Northern Parterre are laid out. Between them, in front of the Galerie des Glaces, two wide and deep basins with marble kerbs inclose the motionless sheets of water known as the Parterre d'Eau.

These great mirrors, in which are tremblingly reflected the lines of the building, were originally designed by Le Nôtre to be formed of currents of water, tracing out a pattern of flower-beds, squares, and various rectangular figures, surrounded by box-shrubs and turf; but Louis XIV. devised this improvement upon the idea, and two limpid lakes were formed. Soon there rose above the waters long

recumbent statues in bronze, which were purposely made too large in proportion, in order that Louis XIV. might see their lines clearly from the windows of his salons. They form the most important series of bronzes in Europe, and each one of them is a work of grace and dignity.

To each basin there are four recumbent statues, representing the rivers and streams of France, four nymphs lying in unstudied attitudes upon the marble, and four groups of children at the corners. Each subject, with the exception of the group of children, is signed by the artist who modelled it, and also bears the name of the brothers Keller, founders at the Arsenal of Paris. Charles Le Brun, the King's chief painter, made a rough sketch for each artist, in order to preserve the unity of the whole. The drawings were submitted to Louis XIV., who accepted them or modified them; and then, acting on these preliminary suggestions, the sculptor set to work.

It might seem as if the artists, after so much prompting, could only have produced an impersonal kind of work, without force or originality; but this is far from being the case. The power of Coyzevox is easily distinguishable from the flexibility of Tubi; the gracefulness of Magnier cannot be mistaken for the vivacity of Legros; and in the

FLIGHT OF STEPS, NORTHERN PARTERRE

second rank one may recognise Le Hongre, Raon, and Regnaudin.

These masters of French sculpture in the seventeenth century have made the gardens of Versailles into a veritable museum of art. Even before we leave the terrace just below the Palace we see Olympus invading the park; at the foot of the steps rise two great marble vases, the one representing Peace being by Tubi, and that representing War by Coyzevox. But the bronze figures on marble tablets which surround the Parterre d'Eau are here visible in all their magnificence, though time has been at work upon their wonderful material. At the foot of the Vase of Peace we see the two figures of the Loire and the Loiret by Regnaudin, powerful and austere figures, with their attendant genii, and scattered round them on the ground the fine fruits produced by the countries they water. Behind the large figures are three babies in a cluster together, playing with flowers, shells, and looking-glasses. These cupids, laughing and round and chubby though they be, have a little of the solemnity of the *grand siècle;* their brothers of the eighteenth century are much more graceful and voluptuous.

This group is matched, on the other side of the same basin, by the recumbent statues of the Rhône and the Saône by Tubi, the artist who, though born

in Rome, imbibed so much of the spirit of France and of her graceful and reticent art. The Rhône is represented as a majestic and stern old man, crowned with leaves; he is leaning on a rock, whence the bubbling stream flows, and in one hand he holds an oar, which a little Triton is trying to lift. The warm colouring of the bronze, with its tints of green, is admirable in the sunlight. The goddess of the Saône is lying on vine-leaves and clusters of ripe grapes, and her generous lines have all the suppleness that Tubi knows so well how to give. The cupid by whom she is attended is pressing grapes between his chubby little hands; it is a vivid memory of Burgundy and its golden grape harvest. These two beautiful figures are also accompanied by two groups of children. We will pass over the four lovely nymphs who bend over the margin of the basin on both sides, and we will approach the northern basin, which is opposite to the Vase of War.

Here the Marne in her grave beauty, supporting a horn of plenty, does honour by her gracefulness to her sculptor, Étienne Le Hongre. The Seine, by the same master, serves as a fellow to its tributary. One would have wished this charming river to be represented by some gracious and serene nymph, crowned with ears of corn; but the sculptor has given us a stern old man who does not remind us in any

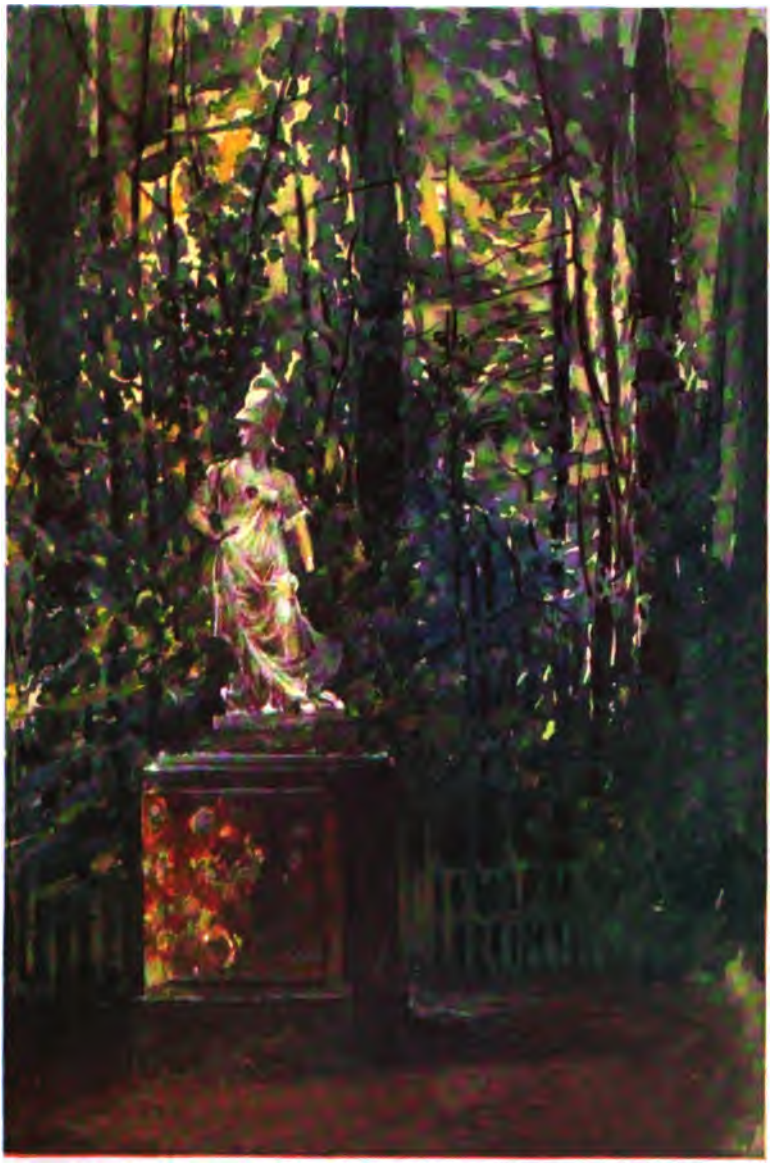
respect of the Seine, with her slow-flowing waters and her flowery curves.

But Coyzevox, with his freedom and originality, has justly interpreted the Garonne and the Dordogne, the two benefactors of rich and sunny Gascony. The Garonne appears as a river god, with a face full of energy and a *spirituel* smile. A winged cupid is scattering flowers and fruit. It is a very happy performance, very French in its grace and force.

The Dordogne faces it in the form of a powerful woman, recumbent and smiling. Her delicate features are surrounded by a crown of flowers. Round her are scattered fruit, corn and vine branches, the rich harvest of the south; beneath her splendid arm are two flowing urns, the Dore and the Dogne. And these two figures are accompanied, like the others, by a twining group of little children.

At the margin of the basin are four nymphs similar to those beside its fellow. Those by the southern basin were modelled by Le Hongre and Raon; those beside the northern one by Le Gros and Magnier. They are all equally graceful in their slender suppleness, but there is a special character in the expression and pose of each. These gentle feminine figures, with their quiet gestures, lying among flowers and shells, are the most perfect personification of the

waters, and the smiling Loves by which their dreamy and playful charm is accompanied, form one of the most seductive subjects in the park. In this immense garden there is "childhood everywhere," to quote the words of Louis XIV.'s own command; and here, quite close to us, by the steps that lead down to the Parterre du Midi, two little bronze sprites represent it delightfully. They are riding two marble sphinxes. These are the "children on the sphinxes" so popular in the gardens, and were for a long time above the stairs of Latona, in the position occupied by the vases decorated with suns. They were modelled in 1660 by the earliest sculptor of Versailles, the master Jacques Sarrazin. Just at first they were gilded, but the gilding was afterwards removed to make them more harmonious with the bronzes of the Kellers. For it was only gradually that Versailles assumed its final splendour, by dint of experiments, and groping efforts, and labour and time. The original decoration was of stone; and it was so when Louis XIV., as quite a young man, gave to the two Queens, his mother and his wife, the "fêtes of the enchanted isles." As a matter of fact, the heroine of the occasion was the gentle La Vallière, whom the King loved secretly. Vigarani, who arranged the fêtes of Fouquet—of whom Louis XIV. was jealous on account of his riches and his



THE LABYRINTH: STATUE OF MINERVA

splendid specimens of art—had organised the illuminations and fireworks that completed the ballet, the subject of which was taken from Ariosto, and in which the King took the part of Roger.

The success of these superb revels attached Louis still more to Versailles, and perhaps decided him to move the Court thither. The Francinis or Francines, who were skilful in the engineering of waterworks, were also introduced to his Majesty by Fouquet at the same time as Le Nôtre and Le Brun, and laid Versailles under the spell of the sparkling waters. This was in 1668. All the artists in France set to work, and little by little, grove by grove, fountain by fountain, the magic of this "most beautiful spot in the world" was born.

On the other side of the Parterre d'Eau, at the entrance to the Parterre du Nord, two bronzes cast by the Kellers act as fellows to the "children on the sphinxes." One is copied from an antique *L'Arrotino* (the knife-grinder), in the Uffizi at Florence. The other is a reproduction of the Venus of Coyzevox, the original being now in the Louvre. The pedestal of the latter is dated 1686. The idea of this work of the master is taken from the famous "Modest Venus." The harmonious lines of the lissom body are well known, and the pretty gesture with which the arms hide the maiden's nude beauty.

The tablets by which the Northern and Southern Parterres are bordered are ornamented with vases of marble, and more especially with little bronze vases, on which is some curious workmanship by Claude Ballin. Ballin was the King's goldsmith, and it was he who, at this period, chased the monarch's silver furniture.

Just in front of the Parterre d'Eau, and on each side of the steps of Latona, are the "*Cabinets des Animaux.*" To the left is the one that was formerly called the Fountain of the Dawn; to the right is the Fountain of Diana. There are two basins at different levels, and the water falls softly over the coloured marble from one to the other in a cascade. At the corners of the basins there are admirable groups representing subjects connected with the chase, in which the sculptors of animals of the *grand siècle* have shown all their surprising mastery of their art. Here Houzeau and Van Clève were employed.

The statue that gave its name to the Fountain of the Dawn stands a little way back, near the steps of Latona. It is charming and graceful, with a star upon its forehead; at its feet there is a cock beneath the folds of the trailing garment, which reveals the shoulder and the beautiful arm that is raised to point to the Dawn. This work is by Gaspard Marsy. It

is accompanied by other statues, which form part of a series of twenty-four, ordered altogether by Colbert in 1674; and as they are of precious workmanship they are placed in the near neighbourhood of the royal dwelling. It was Charles Le Brun who designed them, as he always did; and the allegories are in the taste of the period.

The subjects are: The Four Elements, the Four Seasons, the Four Hours of the Day, the Four Quarters of the Globe, the Four Poems, and the Four Temperaments (or Dispositions of Man). These childish divisions, which convey little to our minds to-day, pleased the fancy of our forefathers. The statues cost the King a hundred and fifty thousand *livres;* and reasons connected with composition and balance have fixed their position and grouping most happily. Some of these figures are masterpieces.

Such, for instance, is *Spring,* which stands near the *Dawn.* It is an exquisite figure of Flora with roses in her hair; she is carrying a basket of flowers; her rather cold expression is redeemed by the harmony of the lines. We owe this to the chisel of Magnier.

Round the Fountain of Diana there is a similar arrangement of graceful statues. The one facing the *Dawn* is the *Air,* by Le Hongre. It stands in the same place as when it was admired by the am-

bassadors of the King of Siam, who visited Versailles in 1686. The ambassadors showed their good taste, says the *Mercure* gazette, by making a very long examination of the statue called the *Air,* "which is thought very highly of on account of the delicacy of its workmanship and its accuracy of form." The young goddess seems to be enveloping herself in halos; the robe that floats round her is as though it were the atmosphere sheltering her; the eagle, king of the air, is at her feet.

At the extreme edge of the basin is *Diana the Huntress,* from whom the fountain takes its name; she represents the hour of evening, and on her forehead is the crescent of the night. The figure is tall and slight, and seems to be moving quickly forward, followed by her bounding greyhound. This is one of the rarest works of art in the park, and is by Desjardins.

Venus, who represents the ardent hour of midday, accompanies the chaste Diana. Her pure charm and divine grace are unequalled, for Gaspard Marsy, trained in the study of the antique, united in this figure the perfection of Greek art with the freshness of the French spirit.

Everywhere, against the dark background of the trees, we see the white procession in all its beauty. All along the fences of the Parterre du Nord it goes,

GARDEN OF THE PETIT TRIANON

down the steps of Latona, and across the grass plots, until it is lost among the luxuriant trees. Let us follow it along the Path of the Three Fountains, leading to the grove of the same name, where once the music of many jets of water rose from three basins that are now filled up.

After the *Venus* of Marsy we come to the *Europe* of Mazeline, which is said to be a portrait of one of Louis XIV.'s mistresses, Madame de Montespan. Close to this statue is *Africa,* represented by a vigorous and resolute negress, a work of striking realism, which is followed by the *Night* of Roan. A woman smiles mysteriously; her brow is crowned with poppies; her dress is sewn with stars; she holds the lantern of the night; and the bird of darkness is at her feet.

The *World,* by Massou, follows, and the *Pastoral Poem,* a work full of rural charm, by Granier. Let us leave the Path of the Three Fountains at this junction of paths, where we find the orators and sages of antiquity gathered together. They are expressed in a somewhat monotonous form, but there are certain details by which we may recognise Apollonius, Ulysses, and Lysias. We will go on our way, following the line of statues, which are of little importance, however, until we come to *Winter,* a fine old man in marble with an air of weariness, the work of the

genial Girardon. The master has put the whole of his artist's soul into this forceful work. One should visit it at the time when its æsthetic effect is strongest, when the desolate park is robbed of all its foliage. The power of the sculptor tragically and earnestly recalls the realities of life and pain, among all the proud and joyous allegories of the gardens.

And now we have reached the *Baths of the Nymphs,* while the two statues at the corners of the Water Path form part of the series of "Temperaments," a series whose symbolism is very wearisome. Returning to the corner of the fence we come to the *Satirical Poem,* a real, biting page from Boileau, translated into marble. The subjects that follow are without interest, but quite close to the Palace is the *Heroic Poem*, a figure which Drouilly has invested with the proud and noble bearing of Louis XIV. himself. He is crowned with laurels; his whole air is magnificent; and upon the damascene corslet that he wears above his Roman garment is a sun, the emblem of the King.

The Northern Parterre, round which we have just been walking, has preserved the appearance given to it by Le Nôtre, which we may see in old pictures. The parterre, as formerly, is composed of turf and flowers, in triangles arranged side by side.

Among the gay flower-beds are two basins of clear,

crystalline water, the old Basins of the Crowns, originally ornamented by Le Hongre and Tubi. But the numerous restorations of the two basins have demolished the great beflowered crown formerly held up by clustered nymphs and tritons. Nothing remains but the harmonious groupings of the nymphs and seagods.

Between them rises the exquisite, the incomparable Fountain of the Pyramid, by François Girardon. This marvellous piece of work stands, beneath its own glittering jets, just opposite to the Water Path. Le Brun devised the idea of it, which was used to such advantage by the most gifted of artists. He gave the most minute attention to this work, which is one of the oldest at Versailles, having been put in its place in 1669. If the general form of the fountain is borrowed from the Italians, how French is every minutest detail in its charm, and grace, and intellectuality! It is composed of the flora and fauna of the ocean, among which sirens and tritons are deporting themselves. Upon the lead, which was originally gilded, as much workmanship has been employed as though it were a specimen of the goldsmith's art. Under the quivering foam the sea-gods seem to be alive, as they laughingly chase each other in the running water; for it is especially on the day when the water is playing that the fountains seize our imagina-

tion. The various groups only reach their full significance when they are animated and inundated by torrents of spray.

Further on, towards the Water Path, is the *Bath of the Nymphs of Diana,* also the work of Girardon. The artist has decorated the deep square basin with a bas-relief, which is as pure as an antique. Eleven nymphs of graceful outline are disporting themselves on the borders of a river. Time has tinged the coloured lead with green; rosy tints and blue shadows pass across the dream-like landscape; and when the silver cascade glides over the bodies of the maidens they seem to shiver under the touch of the water. The scene, so full of graceful movement, is lively and animated; the groups of girls spread out as though in a garland, and in the golden air one seems to hear their chattering voices, their laughter, their cries of joy. On the sides, Girardon's masterly work is accompanied by bas-reliefs by Le Hongre and Le Gros. They represent sea-gods, naïads and little tritons, surrounded by the fruits of the sea.

Leaving the *Bath of the Nymphs of Diana,* we enter, on the same level, the beautiful *Allée d'Eau,* or Water Path. This shady walk at first contained seven little fountains, repeated twice, and formed of clusters of children in gilded lead. They held up metal baskets filled with fruits and flowers, modelled

BRONZE AMORINE IN THE ALLÉE D'EAU

by Massou and Le Hongre. It was Claude Perrault, the doctor-architect, who conceived the idea of these graceful groups, the oldest of which were set up in 1670.

Eight years later the number of groups was increased to twenty-two, and in 1688 the whole series was recast in bronze, in the form that we see to-day.

This is the "Allée des Marmousets," or "Path of Urchins," as it is popularly called—the charming walk where a whole world of little tritons, cupids, and termini are intertwined, playing, dancing, singing; and when, on the day of the *Grandes Eaux,* the rushing water passes over them, they really seem to be alive under the stream.

The end of this path where gaiety reigns opens out into a crescent to enclose the Basin of the Dragon. The leaden figures that rise from the waters of the Basin of the Dragon are quite modern and rather quaint imitations of old ones that have disappeared. They are, however, of an imposing appearance. The monster whose wings are outspread in the middle of the water is the serpent Python whom Apollo vanquished; he is preparing to fight the dolphins who are dashing towards him. Some children riding swans are aiming arrows at the creature.

This restoration took place at the same time as that

of the Basin of Neptune, which was just finished in time for the fêtes of 1889, celebrating the centenary of the States General that met at Versailles in 1789.

The huge semi-circle of the Basin of Neptune lies behind the Basin of the Dragon. It is arranged like an antique theatre, and it preserves all its decorative value even when there is no water to vary its vast lines It presents, however, one of the finest effects of water at Versailles, for the jets reach a height of twenty-one metres. This basin was designed by Le Nôtre, and Mansart superintended the greater part of its construction. The restoration of the wall that supports it, which Gabriel carried out under Louis XV., made hardly any change in the original plan.

The indifferent state of Louis XIV.'s finances at the time of the League of Augsbourg prevented the realisation of his schemes for the decoration of the Basin of Neptune; but they were resumed by Louis XV., and carried out with such energy that they resulted in the most successful and most gigantic decorations in lead existing in the world.

The principal subject represents Neptune and Amphitrite seated in a great sea-shell, surrounded by nereids, tritons, and marine monsters. The group is extremely animated, and full of grace and vigour. This beautifully moulded piece of work is by the

elder Adam, whose signature is on the lead, with the date 1740, the year when the decorations of the basin were set up.

On the plateau to the right is a work by Jean-Baptiste Lemoine. It represents the ocean as a nude young man of great beauty, seated on a marine monster. On the plateau to the left is Proteus, modelled by Bouchardon. The fine old man is lying upon a giant unicorn, and round him are marine plants, some fish, and a serpent. At the extremities of the basin two delightful little Loves, in which we begin to see the seductiveness of the little winged god of the end of the eighteenth century, are by Bouchardon. They are riding two dragons, and the monsters, despite their irritation, are obedient to the chubby little hands that restrain them by the help of flowing scarves flung round their necks.

The shelf surrounding the basin is bordered by a gutter from which rise twenty-three jets of water; the shelf supports eleven vases of lead, of which double the number appears to right and left of the chief group. They are ornamented with a variety of details.

Even when this magnificent basin is lying quietly in the shade of the venerable trees it is full of dignity. Beyond its still waters one can see the long, cool walk of the *Marmousets,* dominated by the Fountain of the

Pyramid as though by a splendid bouquet; and beyond that again appears part of the Palace, outlined against the sky. But when, on the day of the *Grandes Eaux,* the scene is enlivened by the rising waters, the Basin of Neptune has quite a magical effect.

The park is bounded on this side by large trees, which surround the circular part of the basin; and beneath their shade are three large pieces of sculpture, which have no value beyond that of their decorative effect.

One of them, however, the one in the centre, is a famous group, placed here only in 1702. It represents *The King's Renown* as a woman writing Louis XIV.'s life in the book of History, which is supported by Time. Renown has outspread wings and the air of one inspired; in her left hand she holds a portrait of Louis XIV., a very unmistakable portrait, with the long nose accentuating the profile, and the heavy curled peruke framing the face. But all this was renewed under the Restoration, for the original medallion was defaced in 1792, at the time when the revolutionary authorities were trying to proscribe all royal effigies in works of art.

This group, which was designed by Le Brun, was executed in Rome and completed in 1686 by Domenico Guidi. The composition is heavy and massive; it is not seen with equal clearness from every

THE ALLÉE D'EAU

side; and it is wanting in that harmonious simplicity with which the French sculptors of the same period invested their allegorical works. Such a work of art as this, together with the famous equestrian statue by Bernin—relegated by Louis XIV.'s offended taste to the end of the Pièce des Suisses—furnish us with the best and most instructive comparison, and enables us to judge how justly the "sceptre of the arts," according to the phrase of the day, was wrung from Italy by the France of that period.

The Water Path was formerly bordered on one side by the Grove of the Three Fountains and on the other by that of the Arc de Triomphe. The former is quite in disorder, and the other has kept but little of its former magnificence.

It took its name from a triumphal arch raised in honour of Louis XIV. It formed three doorways of gilded ironwork, which framed the sparkling waters in marble and gold. To the right and left of the grove the Fountains of Glory and of Victory were surmounted by a genius holding a crown of gold; and lastly, the group known as *France Triumphant* called for the admiration of all. This still exists, having survived the destruction of the grove in 1775, when Louis XVI. began to alter the gardens.

The Fountain of France Triumphant, which has been restored in our own days, is bereft of its rich

gilding; but it is nevertheless an imposing work of art, and we can recognise the hand of Tubi in the majestic woman with the long mantle, bearing upon her shield the "Sun" of Louis XIV.

By the same master is the figure of Spain, represented as a young man seated on a lion beside the triumphal car of France. He has the round, curly head common to Tubi's statues.

The fine old man who represents the Empire—vanquished like Spain—is seated upon an eagle. In its vigorous treatment it is easy to recognise the work of Coyzevox. The group as a whole is a little heavy, but it is not without nobility, and perhaps the effect may have been lightened by the brilliant gilding with which it was formerly covered.

In the grove, so greatly shorn of its old splendour, several works of art have been brought together, though disconnected in subject and of various origins, and have acquired a value of their own through being well arranged, and suitable for the open air. We may notice especially two fine statues, originally placed in the famous Labyrinth, which was done away with in Louis XVI.'s time because it was falling into disrepair. In it were gathered all the interesting groups in coloured lead representing the fables of Æsop, of which none have been preserved but the two fine figures of *Love* and *Æsop,* which still show

their original rosy tints under the green discoloration of time.

Among the great walks that diverge from the Basin of Neptune, Le Nôtre planned the bright grove of the Water Theatre. It took its name from its configuration, and its effects of water were unequalled; but nothing remains to us of this marvellous spot, this mass of fountains and statues, except engravings and paintings of it. The Water Theatre disappeared in the middle of the eighteenth century, and in its place is a large cup-shaped hollow covered with turf and known as the *Rond Vert,* which is charming in its beautiful simplicity, with its crown of great trees. The Island of Children still exists quite close to it, and adds a touch of gaiety to its wildness.

These pretty children, full of smiling charm and grace, are playing in the water of the basin, and climbing upon the rock. The name of the sculptor of this masterpiece of freshness was unknown until our own day; but we may feel quite certain that it is the work of the accomplished master Hardy, to whom, among others, we owe the admirable frieze of the children at play, in the Salon of the *Œil-de-Bœuf.*

The large Grove of the Baths of Apollo only dates from 1778. It replaced several groves of older date

that were planted and done away with at various times.

The celebrated group, *Apollo attended by Nymphs,* which, during the earliest days of Versailles, under the *Grand Roi,* adorned the famous Grotto of Tethys, was finally brought to this spot. From the Grotto of Tethys it was taken to the Grove of Domes; there it was placed under some gilded canopies in the first Grove of the Baths of Apollo; finally, under Louis XVI., Hubert Robert, the great landscape gardener, in obedience to the taste of the day, designed for this corner of the vast French garden a very beautiful "English" one. He made a new and very picturesque grotto, which still exists, and the beautiful group of the god of light and of the nymphs was placed in it.

There is nothing here of the majesty and symmetry of Louis XIV.'s park; but there is all the charm of the unexpected, of tasteful disorder, of a conventional kind of wildness, of great trees, and water falling in a cascade from the grotto cut in the rock and supported by columns. This guarded corner, where art is concealed under a semblance of real nature, is a restful change for the mind and the eye, after the sumptuous symmetrical walks, the groves arranged in geometrical figures, the whole carefully thought-

FOUNTAIN AT THE GRAND TRIANON

out plan, in short, which gave so much pleasure to our forefathers in their intellectual courage.

It was Hubert Robert who arranged the beautiful sculpture at the entrance to the mysterious cave, where it appears to gain in whiteness from the surrounding shadow.

Wearied by his day's journey in the chariot of the sun, Apollo has come to rest in the dwelling of the goddess of the sea. The daughters of Tethys crowd round the glorious Phœbus, bathing him, and bringing perfumes. The divine son of Latona yields his youthful form to the tender care of the nereids; his proud, noble head, with its flowing hair, is crowned with flowers; his profile is that of Louis XIV., for the *Grand Roi* loved to see himself in the character of the God of Light, and Apollo appears in all parts of the park, as does also Louis's emblem, the Sun.

There are eight daughters of the sea, surrounding the God of Day, each with her own special grace carefully rendered, and manifested in gestures of submission, or voluptuousness, or timidity. Their graceful forms, bowed as though in prayer or rising like flowers towards the light, are full of the radiance of youth, and of virgin purity and warmth. Girardon, always so masterly in the representation of sweetness and truth, is the chief author of this great

work, but Regnaudin came to his assistance and gave it the full benefit of his powerful touch.

In the hollows of the Grotto, to right and left, were placed the horses of the Sun. Those on the right are the work of Gilles Guérin. The spirited and quivering animals are boldly modelled. Those on the left are by the brothers Marsy, and although technically unconventional they are surprisingly animated.

At the end of Marie Antoinette's favourite grove, at the junction of the long straight walks, one of the four Basins of the Seasons, that of Ceres, shows that goddess surrounded by children playing in the corn. This group is of lead, and was formerly gilded. In it Regnaudin showed a profound knowledge of his art. Its full significance is only seen when the jet of water falls upon the flowery harvest.

The Goddess of Summer, though modelled rather heavily, is not wanting in charm. Lying back among the rich products of the fields she watches the liquid column rising towards the blue sky and shining among the leaves. Three naked cupids are lying in the corn; under the flowing water they are as bright as poppies scattered in the field.

The round basin of Flora is not far from here, at the junction with the Path of Spring. Though it has been restored the pretty statue has kept its charms of

grace and delicacy. Above its smiling face it is crowned with three nosegays of eglantine. The whole season of flowers is in this island of roses. Naked Loves are playing with garlands that droop into the water of the basin. Tubi put into this work all the art, harmony, grace and freshness at his command.

From the Basin of Flora a walk leads us to the Grove of the Star. There was originally in the centre of this grove an important fountain called the Mountain of Water, which was done away with in 1704, and has left no sign of its existence. A few antiques, such as the excavations in Italy have revealed in such numbers, are becoming moss-grown at the corners of the hedges.

The neighbouring fountain, called the Obelisk, occupies a large space of regular form, surrounded by fine thickets. The Banqueting Hall or Council Hall was formerly here, but was destroyed at the same time as the Mountain of Water, and replaced by this raised basin, the slopes of which are turfed. In the centre is the cluster of reeds from which the jets of water rise in the form of an obelisk.

Let us now retrace our steps towards the Basins of the Seasons, in search of the Fountain of Enceladus. French art has here yielded to the taste of Italy, but the result is not unsuccessful. The figure is by

Marsy. The giant, who is crushed under the débris of Mount Ossa and Olympus, which he had heaped up in order to climb to the sky, is of considerable power. From his mouth issues a jet of water seventy-eight feet in height.

The Grove of the Domes is quite close to the Enceladus. It has experienced many changes. It takes its name from two pavilions in coloured marble covered with gilded lead, which no longer exist. They were designed by Mansart, and the decorative scheme was completed by eight statues on pedestals ornamented with shells.

Louis XIV. loved to visit this spot accompanied by the ladies of the Court. Refreshments were served to the sound of music. The chronicles of the Court frequently mention the giving of entertainments in the Grove of the Domes.

The delicious domes of white marble had coloured columns and pilasters, and at the corners and between the pilasters were bronze trophies. They disappeared in the nineteenth century for want of repairs, which is much to be regretted. We may derive some idea of the general effect from the double exedra that has recently been restored round the basin. Its details do not exactly correspond to the original arrangement, but as a whole it is quite in the spirit of the decorations of Le Nôtre. All the statues, except

CHOIR OF THE CHAPEL

one, that adorned this grove at the end of Louis XIV.'s reign have been replaced upon their pedestals, and form a most delightful collection of choice works of art.

The most ancient and the most delicate of these figures is Tubi's *Galatea.* She has the beauty of an antique Venus and the intellectual charm of a woman of to-day; her brow is crowned with flowers, and her eyes seek Acis the young shepherd, whose song she hears. He, the rival of Polyphemus, is playing the flute quite near to her, and caressing the beloved Nymph with his eyes. The grace of his young form —also the work of Tubi—is quite incomparable. The two lovers are separated by a figure of Aurora, by Magnier. The young goddess is opening the gates of the East and scattering roses; she is gliding lightly upon the clouds like the first rays of morning.

Leaving the Grove of the Domes by the gate through which we entered it, we proceed towards the Parterre of Latona, approaching it from below.

Very brilliant in their new gilding are the three basins, that of Latona and those of the Lizards, in which we see the metamorphosis of the wicked peasants of Lycia, who refused to receive the mother of Apollo when she was on the point of being delivered.

The carpet of turf is enclosed by brilliant shrub-

beries; on the steps that form the base of the amphitheatre are vases, always full of flowers. For this is the gardeners' pride, and has always been their favourite spot since the garden was first made.

The clipped yews that border the slopes on each side of the parterre should be somewhat restrained to avoid injuring the design of Le Nôtre. These trees are too luxuriant; in places they hide the statues of the parterre, and therefore their lines are not merely unfortunate, but harmful. All along the slopes of Latona the whiteness of marble statues is contrasted with the background of dark hedges. They are figures copied from the antique by the pupils of our Royal Academy at Rome, and have no value but that of their decorative effect.

At the bottom of the Parterre of Latona are grouped the principal statues, and there are here some admirable termini, facing the Palace. They have not the usual stiffness of termini; they are surprisingly animated in expression, and although inspired by the art of Rome, are quite modern in spirit.

There is a succession of termini all along the Paths of Spring and Autumn, beginning with the *Diogenes* of Lespagnandel, with the *Ceres* of Poulletier facing it. "His Majesty," says Poulletier, in speaking of this work, "had the goodness to appear satisfied with

it when I set it up, and exclaimed repeatedly: 'There is a beautiful woman! How rare it is to find one like her!' It is, moreover, a fact that the King showed his satisfaction by rewarding me in proportion to the merit he found in my work." This was the time when the King paid his artists liberally; but later on, after the expenses of his unfortunate wars, he changed in this respect.

The semi-circle at the top of the grass plots, which corresponds to another semi-circle at the end of the Royal Walk, is decorated with four groups of unequal worth. Learned tradition attributed wrong names to them, which figure in old guide-books, and even in recent works. We will only call attention to the Laocoön. This copy by Tubi is one of the best of the many that have been made of the famous Rhodian work of art.

Here, in Louis XIV.'s time, stood the masterpieces of Puget, which were moved to the Museum of the Louvre during the last century; the *Perseus delivering Andromeda* and the *Milo of Crotona,* which combined all the special tastes of the *Grand Roi,* who showed them proudly to his visitors. And it was from this same spot that he preferred to point out to his guests the beautiful arrangement of the gardens, for it is from here that the paths and avenues of the park diverge, and from this point, too, on the days

of the *Grandes Eaux,* one can obtain the most extensive view of the jets of water.

By going along the Autumn Walk one may see a new series of termini, and a copy of the *Dying Gaul* of the capital. Its fellow is the celebrated *Nymph with the Shell* of Coyzevox, as a matter of fact only a rather weak copy of the original, which is in the Museum of the Louvre, sheltered from the inclemencies of the weather. But none the less this interpretation of it is the most tasteful and bewitching statue at Versailles; for it admirably reproduces the soft curves of the bending figure, and the pretty round head. In her pretty fingers the girl is holding the shell in which she is catching the water from the flowing urn at her side. In the perfection of the lines one may detect the art of the Ancients, but the charm and graciousness of the smile are altogether French in spirit.

The wide, majestic Royal Walk spreads out before us its carpet of turf, which is well known as the *Tapis Vert* of Versailles. It is magnificently framed by lofty trees of great luxuriance, which throw their shade over the row of statues leading down to the Basin of Apollo—twelve white statues along the fence, alternating with twelve large vases decorated with trophies and flowers. Most of them are copies from the antique; and especially noticeable is the

BASIN OF LATONA

delicate *Venus de Medici,* copied by Flamen, so subtly expressive in its pretty animation; and the *Venus leaving the Bath,* which was partly the original work of Legros, and resembles, in its grace and harmony, a work by Racine. Twelve colossal marble vases, original in shape and decorated with flowers and ornaments, alternate with the twelve statues that stand along the *Tapis Vert.*

The Royal Walk ends in the semi-circle that encloses the Basin of Apollo. The series of statues, standing out against the background of the trees, is continued all round it, but there is nothing in them to arrest our attention. One is attracted rather by the great sheet of still water from which Apollo's glorious car emerges. Here J. B. Tubi's delicate and supple art becomes amazingly powerful. This group that is before us is the most famous, among so many, in the gardens of Versailles. It was formerly gilded, and its glittering appearance as seen from the balconies of the Palace was a revelation of magical brightness. It has now lost its dazzling surface.

Here again, in the features of the young god, we find those of Louis XIV.; but was he not indeed the *Roi Soleil,* this Louis who bore as his emblem the radiant head of Phœbus? This immense group is the complement of the one in the Grotto of Tethys, and represents the refreshed Apollo leaving the

domain of his spouse, the Goddess of the Sea. His triumphal car is issuing from the waves; the young god, splendid in his youth, is holding the reins of the four horses in one hand. La Fontaine describes the superb team in these words:

> Les coursiers de ce dieu commençant leur carrière
> À peine out hors de l'eau la croupe tout entière;
> Cependant on les voit impatients du frein:
> Ils forment la rosée en secouant leur crin. . . .

The long, flowing hair is crowned with laurels, the proud head is bent, the eyes are following the course of the divine steeds, who are rearing, and beating the water with their quivering hoofs. The chariot is surrounded by Tritons; and one of them, a monstrous creature, is stiffening his body, and puffing out his cheeks on the couch, as he proclaims to the Earth the coming of the brightness of day. All the tints of the sky are reflected in the water, and the dark trees stand round in all their quiet mystery.

The gates at this point serve as a division between the gardens and the old "Little Park," which has kept its enclosing wall, and of which the area is 1738 *hectares,* while the "Great Park," the hunting-park, measured more than 6600 *hectares.* The Little Park is crossed by the Canal, which penetrates into the gardens in the form of an octagonal sheet of water. A

flight of several wide steps indicates the spot where the Court of three reigns was in the habit of embarking, for boating was at all times a favourite diversion with both ladies and *seigneurs*.

The Grand Canal is one of the finest sights in the gardens. It is exactly in a line with the central point of the Palace, from whose windows it may be seen sparkling and quivering in unison with the waters of the Parterre d'Eau.

It was first designed in 1667, when the Basin of Apollo was no more than a Basin of Swans, without any kind of ornament. In order to enlarge the view the King had the happy idea of forming this Canal, which should drain the marshy places of this low-lying ground. The gentlemen of the Academy of Sciences were consulted, and declared that the operation would drain the plain while at the same time beautifying the Park. The Canal was gradually enlarged and at last reached the fine proportions that we see to-day.

It is 1520 metres in length by 120 metres in width. The widest end, where it was designed for a long time to raise a building with colonnades, is 195 metres wide. The "cross-bar of the Canal," which cuts it near the middle in the form of a cross, is 1013 metres long, and extends from Trianon to the site of the old Menagerie, where the King reared rare animals from

every foreign country. The Canal was formerly surrounded by a border of stone, level with the ground. The sheet of water near the Basin of Apollo served as a port for the very numerous pleasure boats.

This flotilla, which disappeared at the time of the Revolution, was composed, in the days of the *Grand Roi,* of boats of every description, built by the naval architects of the Royal Navy. There were launches among them, and miniature galiots and frigates. More than once experiments in new designs for large ships of war were made upon the Canal at Versailles, where the work was carried on by the best carpenters of the port of Dunkirk. New designs for additions to the flotilla were furnished by the Admirals Tourville and Duquesne, and the Marquis de Langeron.

If this miniature flotilla has little concern with the art of navigation, it has at all events a place in the history of art. Every boat was a gem of decoration; Tubi, Mazeline, the Marsys, and above all Philippe, the first of the Caffieri family, were employed in their ornamentation; they were delightfully carved.

The Keller brothers, with the most intelligent care, had cast, in the Arsenal of Paris, some guns for a dainty ship of war.

The most remarkable of these pretty barques was the "Grand Galley," with her escutcheons and carvings, her silken awnings fringed with gold, her pen-

CAFFIERI'S CLOCK

nons and streamers, and rigging of gold and crimson silk. She was a reproduction in miniature of the galley *Reale,* which Puget had carved for the Mediterranean fleet.

In 1674 Venice, the town of gondolas, sent the *Grand Roi,* for his Canal at Versailles, some brilliantly gilded gondolas. They were impelled by Italian gondoliers in their picturesque costume. A certain number of their compatriots joined them, attracted by the advantages offered to them, and these, together with some men of Provence, composed the regular crews of the Canal boats. Their captain was Consolin, of Marseilles; but nearly all the names of the crews are Venetian.

A nautical city soon grew up on the borders of the Canal, a sort of large corporation with its own regulations and customs. In the "little town," which was enclosed by walls, the families of the Italian immigrants multiplied and lived in peace until the end of the eighteenth century. Their low houses are partly preserved, and are still called by the old name: Little Venice. On the occasions of the great Court fêtes the Grand Canal was ornamented with buildings of fire; the illuminations on the banks, reflected by the water, created a most fantastic effect. The first experiment of this kind took place in 1673.

The *Gazette* relates that on the King's birthday Monseigneur le Dauphin gave a great fête at Versailles, with fireworks on the Grand Canal, which was illuminated in every direction with an infinity of lights, and with other rejoicings which lasted for a great part of the night." This was the announcement of that wonderful evening in August, 1674, which was the climax of the fêtes given by the King in honour of the second conquest of Franche Comté.

The illumination of all the gardens was superintended by Vigarani. As soon as it was dark the Court went out to walk in them. The grand lines of the parterres and of the Royal Walk were reproduced in light, as well as those of the Grand Canal throughout its length. The latter was decorated with termini, and figures, and fish, and with buildings at different distances. At the head of the Grand Canal were pyramids of light, and in front of them two horses of fire driven by heroes "with the action of those of Montecavallo at Rome." Their Majesties and the Court, during the illuminations, went on the water in gondolas.

At the Cross were four large pavilions ornamented with termini; at the end that reached Trianon was Neptune's car surrounded by tritons; at the end near the Menagerie was that of Apollo, with the Hours flying at his horses' heads. All these designs, com-

posed of transparencies, were at least twenty-two feet high.

In the space at the furthest extremity of the Canal arose the principal subject in the illuminations, a gigantic palace of light standing on rocks, with an arrangement of water-effects, and a crowd of figures by way of decoration.

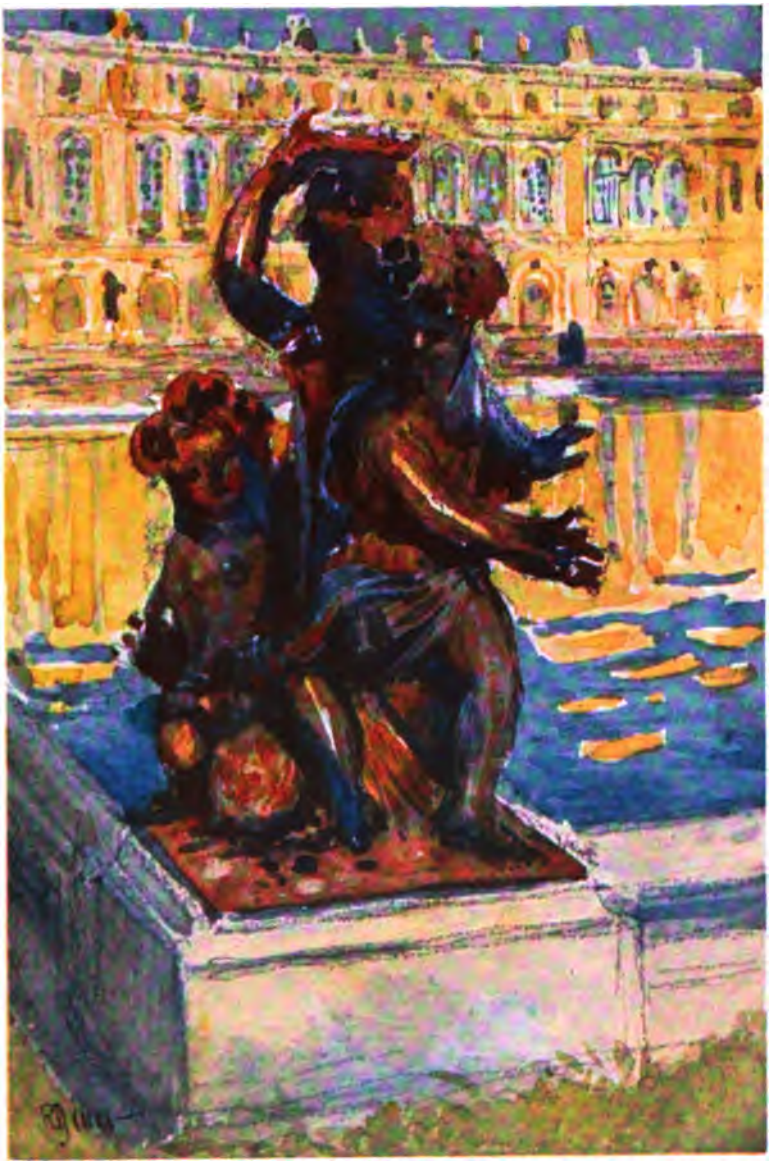
Spectacles such as these were incomparably fine, and the good historiographer, Felibien, becomes almost eloquent as he describes them thus:

"In the deep silence of the night were heard the violins that followed his Majesty's boat. The sound of these instruments seemed to animate the various designs, the softened light of which, in return, lent a special charm to the symphony which it would not have had in total darkness. As the boats passed slowly to and fro there were glimpses between them of the illuminated water round about, and, as the oars struck the dark surface of the Canal softly, with measured strokes, they marked it with streaks of light. . . . And the great sheets of water, lighted only by all the illuminated designs, resembled long galleries and salons enriched and adorned by architecture and statuary of a degree of artistic beauty unknown before, and beyond anything the mind of man can conceive."

Many a time afterwards fireworks at one end or

the other of the illuminated Canal concluded the great nocturnal festivities of the Court of France. They occurred more than once in the reign of Louis XV. The last and perhaps the most beautiful illumination of the Grand Canal and the surroundings of the Basin of Apollo was in honour of the marriage of the Dauphin, Louis XV.'s grandson, to the Archduchess Marie Antoinette of Austria. The King's draughtsman, Moreau le Jeune, perpetuated it in one of his most famous drawings, which is in the Louvre.

From the windows of the balcony of the Galerie des Glaces, which had been covered with a grating, King Louis XV. and Marie Antoinette, who had not gone down into the gardens, were able to watch the brilliant bevy of the ladies of the Court as they walked about the Parterre d'Eau and gazed at the brightly lighted scene stretching away into the distance. They were all in full dress and scintillating with diamonds; and the first of them all was the beautiful favourite, that Comtesse du Barry who was afterwards so cordially to detest the young Dauphine. Her creature, the Duc d'Aiguillon, the future Minister, had gallantly given her his arm; and her blonde beauty, robed in one of her sumptuous toilettes of gold and silver tissue, showed to the best advantage under the illuminations. At a little distance



BRONZE GROUP ON THE PARTERRE D'EAU

was her enemy the Duc de Choiseul, with his sister the Duchesse de Grammont, that friend of the Marquise de Pompadour who would have been so glad, at her death, to take her place. Among the brilliant throng, too, were the languishing Princesse de Lamballe, lately married in France, the pretty brunette Julia de Polignac, who was to become the friend of the future Queen, and many other beautiful women, intoxicated with fêtes and pleasure, who were crowding all they could into their lives, as though they felt themselves to be threatened by fate.

In the days of the old Monarchy there was no part of the gardens of Versailles more animated in appearance than the head of the Grand Canal. The general effect was extraordinary, on account of the numbers of boats of sorry shape with their rich "pavises" and brilliant gilding. The sailors always seemed to be keeping holiday: the crews wore close vests, blue and red coats with gold buttons, stockings and garters of crimson silk, muslin cravats, and ribbons to tie their hair. The waistcoats of the gondoliers were made of crimson Genoese damask, embroidered in gold or silver, and they wore caps of black velvet, silk stockings, and shoes.

It was possible at all hours to select a boat to go to Trianon or the Menagerie, or merely to row about to the sound of violins. Louis XIV., Monseigneur,

and the princes took great pleasure in pastimes of this kind. A narrative by Dengeau, chosen from among twenty others, will show at the same time the part played by Trianon at this period and the importance of the gardens as a whole in the ordinary life of the Court.

The date is July 10, 1669, and the Court is living at Trianon: "At about six o'clock in the evening the King went into his gardens, and after walking about them for some time he paused on the terrace overlooking the Canal, where he saw Monseigneur, Madame le duchesse de Bourgogne, and all the princesses embarking. Monseigneur was in a gondola with Monseigneur le duc de Bourgogne and Madame le princesse de Conti. Madame le duchesse de Bourgogne was in another with some ladies she had chosen; Madame le duchesse de Chartres and Madame le duchesse de Bourbon were in separate gondolas. The King ordered some seats to be placed at the end of the balustrade, where he remained till eight o'clock listening to the music, which was made to play as near him as possible. When the King had returned to the Château the others went up to the end of the Canal, and only returned to the Château in time for supper. The King had at first intended to go on the water, but as he has been showing signs of an attack of rheumatism M. Fagon advised him

against it, although the weather was very fine. After supper Monseigneur and Madame le duchesse de Bourgogne walked in the gardens until two o'clock in the morning, and on the terrace above the house; after which Monseigneur went to bed. Madame la duchesse de Bourgogne then went in a gondola with some of her ladies, and Madame la Duchesse in another gondola, and they remained on the Canal till sunrise. Then Madame le Duchesse went to bed; but Madame la duchesse de Bourgogne waited until Madame de Maintenon started for Saint-Cyr. She saw her get into her carriage at seven o'clock and then went to bed, without appearing tired after her long vigil. Monseigneur le duc de Bourgogne, who had returned to Versailles, was equally wakeful, walking in the gardens until daylight and then going to play mall till six o'clock."

These nocturnal expeditions of the Duchesse de Bourgogne are famous. Her ladies were no less devoted than herself to this class of amusement. It was not at all uncommon for them to be prolonged until dawn; refreshments were taken, and eaten on the water; the musicians followed in another boat at a little distance, and gave to the evenings of Versailles the melody and magic of the nights of Venice.

Retracing our steps along the Royal Walk till we are near the centre, we may see on the right, through

the thick trees that surround it, the famous Colonnade, which looks like the remnant of an antique monument, marvellously preserved. It is circular in shape, and is formed of thirty-two columns of coloured marble, strengthened by pilasters. Above them are arcades supporting a light frieze, and the whole is surmounted by thirty-two vases. The variety of marbles has a charming effect. Violet breccia is blended with the blue and red marbles of Languedoc.

The admiration of contemporaries was not denied to the Colonnade of Versailles, and to the profusion of rare marbles gathered there. A contributor to the *Mercure Galant* of November, 1686, described it when it was barely completed, and added: "The wood that encloses it, with the trellis-work that covers the stems of the trees, makes a background that shows off the architecture to the best advantage, and one must admire this example of pure splendour as much for the refinement of its workmanship as for the richness of its materials. This work plainly shows that the King is the most powerful prince in the world, and that marble is at the present time more common in France than in Italy. . . ."

In the eighteenth century this grove was again unreservedly praised by Blondel the architect: "The richness of the materials, the beauty of the workman-

ALTAR IN THE CHAPEL

ship, the architecture, the sculpture, the hydraulics, are all combined with so much art and intelligence that the appearance of this work alone is sufficient to give an idea of the splendour and prosperity of the arts under Louis the Great."

The Colonnade was built by Deschamps, the worker in marble, from the designs and under the direction of Mansart, who here, as in so many other circumstances was the colleague of Le Nôtre. The perfect concord between the two architects was recognised by such of their contemporaries as were competent judges, and those who called it in question were quite mistaken. Saint-Simon's anecdote, in which this historian was as inaccurate as usual, is often repeated in connection with the journey of Le Nôtre to Italy: "The King led him into the gardens of Versailles, where he showed him what had been done in his absence. At the Colonnade he was silent. The King pressed him to give his opinion: 'Well, sire, what do you wish me to say? You have made a mason into a gardener (this was Mansart) and he has given you a specimen of his work.'" If this was ever said, it was assuredly not in the circumstances narrated by Saint-Simon, for Le Nôtre's journey to Italy took place in 1679, and the Colonnade was only built in 1685.

There is a great wealth of sculpture here. Under

each arch there is a white marble vase, from which a straight jet of water rises, and falling again, overflows to the feet of the vases into a large sheet of water, from which the whole building appears to emerge. For roof this well-designed little temple has all the vault of the sky. From the keystone of each arch smiles the face of a nymph or a naïad, or a spirit of the woods. These heads are by Coyzevox, Eguandin, and others.

Round the arcade there runs a charming bas-relief representing children at play, the work of Coyzevox, Tubi, Le Comte, and Le Hongre. All these sculptured babies are twining garlands of flowers, or playing instruments of every description—lutes, lyres, flutes, violins, cymbals, and tambourines. These little musicians remind us of the use for which the grove was destined, and of all the brilliant concerts that were given in it to the Court, by night and by day.

The central group which completes the harmonious effect was not added until some time had elapsed. It is the famous work by Girardon, his masterpiece, *Proserpine carried off by Pluto,* and the date on the marble is 1699. He certainly did not accomplish it alone, at the advanced age he had then reached, and Robert Le Lorrain, his admirable pupil, did some work upon it. The subject was inspired by the

myth of Persephone, whom the Romans turned into Proserpine. Pluto is carrying off the daughter of Ceres to make her Queen of the Infernal Regions as she is gathering flowers with her companions in the fields of Sicily.

The group is hewed from a single block of marble in bold and harmonious lines. First, there is Pluto, vigorous and ardent, lifting in his arms the weak girl who is trying to escape him. His royal head and flowing hair are crowned with ebony; in his haste he has thrown to the ground at his feet a woman who was trying in vain to arrest his course. Proserpine's companion has all the slender grace of the goddess, and all her expression of despair. This suggestive work, so full of delicacy and force, is one of the finest examples of French art, rich as it is in beautiful statuary. It stands on a high marble pedestal, round which Girardon himself carved a bas-relief full of detail. He develops, in a skilful landscape in perspective, the mythological idea of the rape. Proserpine is seen by the waterside with her companions; Pluto arrives and carries off his tender burden; he hastens towards the triumphal car drawn by horses from the nether regions. The chariot is driven by Love, and from the air two little cupids are slyly aiming their enchanted arrows at the heart of the girl. The swift car of the too-ardent

god is preceded by the furies of the lower world, with hair dishevelled, and with torches in their hands.

Quite close to the Colonnade is a long grove of trees which is entirely without ornament, but which once had its days of renown. It bore the name of the Gallery of Water or the Hall of Antiques, and in the days of Louis XIV. it contained a series of twenty-four fine figures in marble, some original, some copied from the antique, which alternated with orange-trees in pots, jets of water, and marble channels filled with running water. Those who walked here enjoyed a veritable gallery of antique sculpture, chosen in accordance with the Italian taste of the seventeenth century; but no Roman prince in the days of the *Grand Roi* had in his villa a more magnificent hall than this, where the value of the statues was enhanced by the water that reflected them.

The Gallery of Water was done away with in 1704, and in the eighteenth century became the Hall of the Chestnut Trees. It still exists as it is represented in prints of the time, with its eight busts of white marble on pedestals of Rance marble, and its two antiques, *Meleager* and *Antinous.* A little further on is the Basin of the Mirror, or *Vertugadin,* which was thus called on account of its form. In

PETIT TRIANON

the garden lore of the time *Vertugadin* meant "a slope of turf in the shape of an amphitheatre, in which the circular lines that terminate it are not parallel." This sheet of water was made in 1683, at the same time as a larger one—now entirely filled up—called the Royal Island or the Island of Love, on which there were pleasure boats. It is now a shady, mysterious grove, where a large lawn, carefully tended shrubberies, and a single column surmounted by a statue of Diana, remind one the moment one enters of an English garden of the beginning of the nineteenth century. It dates, indeed, from 1817, when Louis XVIII. had the happy idea of making it, to drain this marshy spot.

This grove is now called by the pretty name of the King's Garden. In the centre a vase copied from the antique rises above a number of rose-trees. Outside the trellis-work, among the luxuriant trees, are two colossal statues, the *Flora Farnese* and the *Hercules Farnese,* copied in Rome under Louis XIV.

The wide walk that leads back towards the Palace is the exact counterpart of that of the Bassius of Ceres and Flora. Here the two other Seasons are equally represented by figures of Saturn and Bacchus.

Saturn, as a fine old man, sad and weary, is lying

upon a rocky bank covered with flowers and sea-shells. His great wings, the wings of Time, are outspread; his venerable brow is deeply furrowed, and in his eyes the sadness of those who have lived too long. His long thin form has all the life, all the softened realism, with which the sculptor Tubi animated his works. Round this stern figure are winged Loves with all their attractive chubbiness; they are like birds singing in the snow.

A little further on is the Island of Autumn, overflowing with heavy bunches of grapes. The God of Wine is lying amid the wealth of the grape-harvest. His mysterious smile is as disquieting as that of a Jociende, and indeed, the youth recalls the androgynous Bacchus of Vinci. Marsy has crowned the delicate curly head with vine-leaves; the young figure is both vigorous and of a quite feminine grace; round him little satyrs are playing among the ruddy fruit.

Not far from here, surrounded by thick shrubberies, is the Grove of the Rockeries, formerly known as the Ballroom, where we see tiers of grassy seats, and cascades arranged one above the other, and bubbling jets of water. Formerly there was in the middle a kind of arena, where dancing took place whenever it pleased his Majesty to give a fête here. This hexagonal arena, which was bounded by

a trench ornamented with shell-work, disappeared long ago. The rockeries are still there, and from them a large number of cascades, one above the other; which were very effective in torch-light. The orchestra was arranged above them. We may also see the five tiers of seats for the spectators, and a huge decorative work in lead, which was set up in 1683. It is covered with large ornate vases in lead, and cressets in the form of tripods, delicately ornamented. The metal is very well preserved, and there are still touches of gilding on it. It is a valuable work, which gives some idea of the resources of the art of working in lead during the century when Versailles came into being, at which time, as we have seen, gilded lead was so often and so successfully used.

It was near the Walk of Bacchus that the Labyrinth was situated—formerly so famous for the windings of its paths and for the thirty-nine fountains in trellised niches, where the animals of Æsop's Fables were represented in lead. We saw in another part of the garden, the two figures of Æsop and Love, which originally belonged to this vanished series. The Labyrinth, which was destroyed in 1775, at the time of the general replantation of the park under Louis XVI., became the Queen's Grove. Some exotic trees were brought hither,

such as the Virginian tulip-trees surrounding the central bower, some American walnut-trees and oaks, and two cedars of Lebanon of the same age as those carried to England by the botanist Bernard de Fussien.

In this charming, dusky spot, during a summer's night in 1784, was enacted the deceptive scene arranged by Madame de la Motte, between Cardinal de Rohan and Mademoiselle Oliva, whom the prelate imagined to be Marie Antoinette. The story is well known. The adventuress, Madame de la Motte, being weighed down with debts, conceived the idea of posing as an intimate friend of the Queen, and in her name borrowed money on all sides. Being extremely clever, cunning, and intelligent, she schemed so well that she persuaded the Cardinal de Rohan to believe in the possibility of a reconciliation with the Queen, who had long been his enemy. The credulous Rohan was even convinced, by the lady's bare word, that Marie Antoinette had a tender sentiment for him, and he even believed that Her Majesty, through the Comtesse de la Motte, had given him a *rendezvous* on the night of August 11, in the Queen's Grove.

At the appointed hour the handsome Cardinal was among the thick trees of the Grove. The night was dark. A woman was waiting for him, tall and

PETIT TRIANON: THE FLOWER GARDEN

fair like the Queen, and with her imposing air. She was dressed in a *robe à l'enfant* made of muslin, with a white cape over it; her hat was a "calash" of Italian gauze, which shaded her face. This was the costume generally worn by the Queen in her walks. Rohan bowed, and kissed the white garments of the woman, who gave him a rose, murmuring in a low voice some words which the Cardinal, in his emotion, interpreted in accordance with his wishes.

This woman, who was thirty years old, extremely beautiful, and astonishingly like Marie Antoinette, was an insignificent person, a creature of the Comtesse de la Motte, called Mademoiselle Oliva, and was ignorant of the part she was being made to play that evening. The Comtesse now felt that she might impose upon the Cardinal to any extent, and without further delay she asked, by the Queen's desire, she said, for the famous diamond necklace. Rohan procured it, and the Queen naturally refused to pay the jewellers. The notorious trial that ensued brought disgrace upon Marie Antoinette, entirely innocent though she was, and contributed to bring her into disrepute with the public, who were already so much inclined to think ill of her.

The Queen's Grove is bordered by the Mall Walk, where was played the ancient game of Mall, so much

affected by the French and their old Court. It ends at the gate of the Parterre of Orange Trees. This great parterre is formed of six plots of grass, with a round basin in the middle, and it is laid out in front of the splendid Orangery built by Mansart. Along the side galleries are the three stories of the enormous structure known as the "Hundred Steps." These gigantic stairs, which are not less than thirty metres wide, seem to support the base of the Palace, and give it on that side an additional air of dignity.

Louis XIV. had a predilection for orange trees. He not only adorned his gardens with them, but also the rooms of the Palace. Le Nôtre had made a collection of them that was then unequalled, and included about six hundred specimens. In the summer of 1687 the Fontainebleau collection was brought here, including the orange tree named *Le Bourbon,* which was even then said to be five hundred years old, and which lived until our own days.

A certain number of plants of that period may still be found in the present collection, which contains fourteen hundred orange trees. With the exception of a hundred or so that are scattered through the gardens in the fine weather they are all used to ornament the Parterre of the Orangery.

The Orangery, that huge structure in which they are sheltered through the winter, comprises a central gallery and two side galleries; the former is a hundred and fifty-six metres long by twelve metres fifty centimetres wide. This imposing mass of masonry was built between 1684 and 1686, and cost about 475,000 *livres*. After much deliberation on the subject Mansart furnished the plans for the building and Le Nôtre those for the parterre. They had been experimenting in their common task in the Orangery of Chantilly, for which purpose the King had lent their services to the Great Condé.

When Louis XIV. returned from Fontainebleau in November, 1685, the work was already sufficiently advanced to rouse his admiration by its beauty. Dangeau thus describes his first visit to it. He relates that the equestrian statue of his Majesty, executed in Rome by the Cavalier Bernini, had already been set up on a pedestal. Louis was impatient to see it. "Leaving his carriage he mounted a horse with the object of seeing the new aqueducts. Afterwards he walked in the Orangery, whose magnificence he much admired. He saw the equestrian statue by the Cavalier Bernini, which has been placed there, and he thought that both man and horse were so badly done that he resolved, not only to move it from that spot, but even to break it up."

The famous statue, however, was preserved. It became the *Martius Curtius,* which a very few ardent sight-seers seek at the end of the Pièce d'Eau des Suisses, whither it was relegated. A slight alteration in the marble made it into the Roman hero throwing himself, in the Forum, into the fiery gulf. Its position in the gardens is in a line with Domenico Guidi's group *The King's Renown,* which stands now near the Basin of Neptune, in that great bisecting line that crosses the grounds from north to south, and is at right angles to the line of the Canal, which runs from east to west. The place of the rejected statue by Bernini in the Parterre of the Orangery was provisionally filled by the colossal statue of Louis XIV. as a Roman Emperor, by Desjardins. It seemed, indeed, that this privileged spot could not dispense with a royal figure. But soon the statue was placed inside the building, where we may see it to-day.

The *Mercure Galant,* at the time of the visit of the Siamese ambassadors, at the end of the year 1686, gave the first description of the great building, which was barely completed; and in so doing expressed the sentiments of the public at that time with regard to the embellishments of Versailles.

"This Orangery that is just finished, and was designed by M. Mansart, is a grand and bold

THE LAWN (TOPIS VERT)

achievement, and has already made a great sensation. . . . The gallery at the base of the building is lighted by thirteen arched windows, sunk in the recesses of the arcade. The inside is adorned with no sculpture nor ornamental architecture, as is suitable in this class of building, and the workmanship of the vaulted roof is its chief beauty. . . . It is delightfully cool, and one might enjoy in it every kind of diversion furnished by the theatre without being inconvenienced by heat. It would even be possible to perform operas here, and even in several parts of the building at once without the performers incommoding each other. It was this that made the chief ambassador (of Siam) say that the magnificence of the King was indeed great, seeing that he had raised so superb a building to serve as a house for his orange trees. He added that there were many kings who had not such beautiful houses themselves." It is a fact that the Orangery was often used for dramatic performances and musical recitals, and even at the present day it is not seldom employed for the same purposes, to which it lends itself very conveniently.

It was not long before the approaches and the Parterre of the Orangery were ornamented with decorative sculpture. It was Lespingola who placed the fourteen baskets of fruit and flowers upon the pillars

that support the gate. Le Gros and Le Comte were entrusted with the colossal groups in stone resting on the four strong pillars of the double entrance to the gardens. The former produced *Aurora and Cephalus,* and *Vertumnus and Pomona,* the groups nearest to the town; the latter *Zephyr and Flora* and *Venus and Adonis.* Even inside the parterre there was a complete series of decorations in marble and bronze. Of these only four marble vases are left; two encircled with vine-leaves, by Le Gros and Buirette, and two ornamented with a garland of flowers, designed by Mansart and executed by Le Gros and Robert.

Nothing is left for us to see inside the Orangery but the gigantic statue of Louis XIV., "attired in a Roman coat of armour and a regal mantle, and holding in his hand the bâton of a general." During the Revolution the King was changed into the god Mars, and his head was renewed in 1816 by the chisel of Lorta. In spite of this mutilation the work of Desjardins adds to the interest of this place, to which one comes mainly in search of the potent beauty of architecture, as illustrated by this majestic vaulted roof.

We may regard the Orangery, its terrace, and its parterres, as the sumptuous finishing-touch of the Versailles created by Mansart and Le Nôtre. This

was the splendid climax of a work accomplished after many years.

We must not allow the perfect harmony of the Gardens of Versailles with the taste of the day to make us imagine that they were an innovation of the seventeenth century. We may see their geometrical design even in the miniatures and tapestries of the Middle Ages and the French Renaissance. The first principles of the æsthetics of the gardens were laid down by our forefathers, several centuries before our day, though their fundamental laws were only fully developed in the reign of Louis XIV. Le Nôtre, born of a family of gardeners and brought up among the royal gardeners, was possessed of good traditions, which his exceptional career and his personal genius used to the best advantage; but his magnificent work—so clear, so logical, so intelligent—is derived, not merely from the mind of the single artist, but from that of a whole race.

To review this superb work in its perfection one should see it from the terrace overlooking the Orangery; from whence one may obtain some idea of the thought underlying the great achievement. To the north the great trees planted along the parterre form a solid barrier against the cold north winds, while to the south the flowers are left in the full blaze of the smiling sunshine. The universal symmetry of

Versailles is here broken in a way that is both bold and admirable; and this terrace itself rises like a precipitous cliff fronting the wide horizon.

From this terrace of the Orangery one may see, beyond the gates of the gardens, the sheet of water known as the Pièce des Suisses. The effect of its perspective from here is most happy. It shines like a mirror at the foot of the wooded hills of Satory, which recall the old days when the country about Versailles was entirely composed of forests. Here, more than anywhere else, one may evoke the past.

This was always a favourite resort in the coolness of evening, and especially so in the days of Louis XVI., when it was a common thing to stay up during a great part of the night, listening to the music of the Swiss Guards and of the French Guards. Marie Antoinette, in her white dress, would walk about arm-in-arm with the Comtesse de Provence or the Comtesse d'Artois, her sister-in-law, or preferably with her friends, Mesdames de Lamballe and de Polignac. The park was open to the public; and sometimes the imprudent Queen, accompanied by only one of her ladies, would wander among the crowd. This gave rise to scandals, libels, and pamphlets; for the unhappy princess was the object of the hatred which until then had been reserved for the favourites. The calumnies connected with the

LOUIS XV.'S INNER SITTING-ROOM

affair of the necklace were partly the result of these nocturnal fêtes. But her majesty despised calumny. Proud of her beauty, her power, her innocence, she was eager in her search for pleasure, and joy, and success. Smilingly, disdainfully, she went on her way, and all unconsciously built her scaffold with her own hands. Meanwhile, the royal park, and the bright and scented gardens, were under the spell of the Queen's sweet voice, as her fresh laugh ran through the shady groves, and the long silken trains of her ladies rustled softly on the turf. There was no fear mingled with the enjoyment of pleasure then, for the French Monarchy was believed to be immortal.

Those days were long ago. And now, in the silent, melancholy past, every step reminds us poignantly of the past; by these motionless statues fair queens have walked; it was for them that the quivering water sang in the fountains; the golden leaves that fall from the autumn trees are strewed with memories.

Chapter Five

THE COURT AND THE FÊTES OF VERSAILLES

LOUIS XIV. created and beautified Versailles in order to make it a place where he might give fêtes, long before he dreamt of transferring to it the seat of the Monarchy. The young sovereign wished to have a château built in accordance with his own fancy, where he might give finer fêtes than those he had seen at the house of his superintendent Fouquet, the memory of which, in his jealous pride, he was anxious to efface. He chose the modest hunting-box of his father, Louis XIII., which was built by the architect Salomon de Bronc; he altered it completely, made Le Nôtre design some gardens for it; and when the work was finished—that first work that he so often remodelled afterwards—he displayed all his magnificence in fêtes which have been famous ever since in the annals of the Court of France.

These royal diversions, indeed, form the first events in the history of this house. Even while the work

was being carried on at Versailles Louis XIV. loved to conduct thither, from the Louvre or from the château of Saint-Germain, the brilliant Court that surrounded him in his youth. Sumptuous banquets often took place there after the hunt, or plays were acted, or balls were given in the Palace or the gardens. The *Gazette de France* is full of descriptions of such things. Versailles was inaugurated, so to speak, in a grand fête that lasted from the 7th to the 9th of May, 1664. The King was then twenty-five years old, and his passion for Mademoiselle de La Vallière was at its height. It was widely known, in spite of the presence of the Queens, Anne of Austria and Marie Thérèse, that the fête was really got up for the young mistress; and the success that was deliberately assured to her brother the Marquis de La Vallière, who was the victor in tilting at the ring, might well have made it plain to every one. The choice of Versailles is to be explained by the beauty of the little château, the style of which was already very tasteful. "Although," says a writer of the day, "it has not the great size that is to be remarked in some of His Majesty's other Palaces, it is charming in every respect, everything smiles within and without, gold and marble vie with one another in their beauty and brilliancy. . . . Its symmetry, the richness of its furniture, the beauty of its walks and

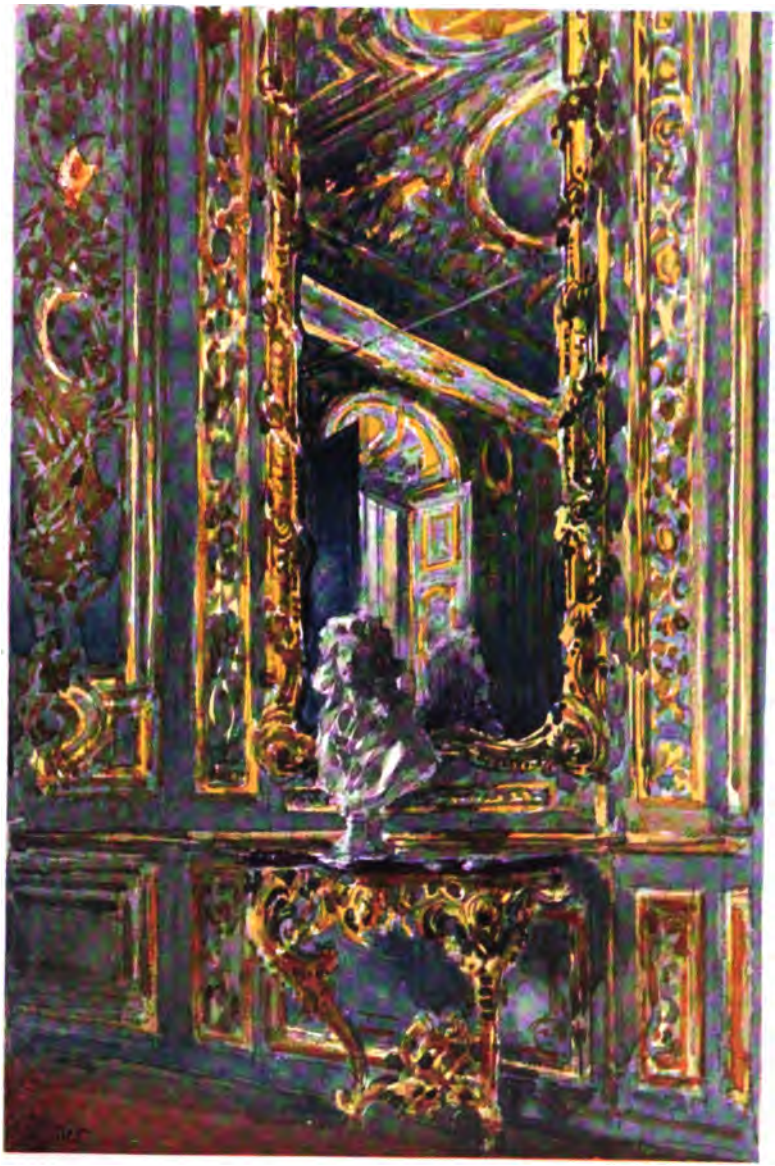
the infinite number of its flowers and orange-trees, render the surroundings of this spot worthy of its own remarkable beauty." The Court stayed there before and after the fête for about ten days, and the King entertained there more than six hundred persons, in addition to the dancers, the actors, and the workmen of all kinds who had come from Paris, "so that they had the appearance of a small army." The details were arranged by Vigarani, "a gentleman of Modena," who was very clever in matters of decoration and mechanism, and was afterwards appointed, with the modest title of the King's engineer, to be the manager of the Versailles fêtes.

The Duc de Saint-Aignan, whose office was that of first gentleman of the chamber, was charged by the King to unite the various entertainments by a common idea: joined with him were M. de Benserede and President de Périgny, who together arranged the ballet and the topical verses, and it was decided that one of the best known episodes in *Orlando Furioso* should be reproduced. The King played the principal part, that of Roger, who was detained with the brave knights his companions in the island of the enchantress Alcina, until the moment when Angelica's ring, placed on Roger's finger, released him from the witchcraft that held him a captive to pleasure. This was the subject of the three days'

entertainments, in which the principal scenes were drawn and engraved by Israel Sylvestre, and of which an official account was printed by His Majesty's orders, with the title: *Pleasures of the Enchanted Island.* The Royal Walk, narrower then than the existing *tapis vert,* was reserved for the various incidents in the fête. We may recognise to-day the three points where they occurred, thanks to the narrative of an eye-witness, who speaks thus of the first spot prepared for the tilting at the ring: "The great path that is at the end of the parterre leads to a very spacious circle, which is traversed by another path of the same width. This spot, which is five or six hundred paces from the Palace, was chosen as the most suitable for the display of the first entertainments in Alcina's enchanted palace." This was nearly in the middle of the Royal Walk, which here widened into a circular space. The representation of *La Princesse d'Elide,* or the Princess of Elis, on the second day, took place quite at the end of the walk. "A large theatre had been put up at about a hundred yards below the circular space where the Knights had tilted at the ring." Finally, for the third day, the palace of Alcina, which was consumed by fireworks, was built on the *grand rondeau,* that is to say, the fine sheet of water at the bottom of the park, afterwards the Basin of Apollo, which already

had its present proportions, but was adorned by no group of figures nor jet of water.

On May 7, at about six o'clock in the evening, the Court adjourned to the spot arranged for the first fête. In the four avenues meeting at the circle large porticos had been raised, adorned inside and out with the arms and ciphers of His Majesty. The high daïs had been placed at the entrance to the circle, and behind it, up the walk, benches were arranged in the form of an amphitheatre, to seat two hundred people. In the trees round the circle were hung chandeliers, furnished with a countless number of candles, to give light to the entertainment after dark. In the enclosure the knights of Ariosto first of all passed in procession before the ladies, surrounded by a splendid retinue of pages, trumpeters, and drummers; after them came a gigantic Car of Apollo, drawn by four horses and driven by the King's coachman, carrying the attributes of Time, and surrounded by the twelve hours of the day and the twelve signs of the Zodiac, on foot. Verses were recited by the actors and actresses of Molière's troupe, who represented the Ages of gold, silver, brass, and of the god Apollo. Then began the game of skill, tilting at the ring. This was a pretext for showing off fine clothes and fine young men. "The King, representing Roger, mounted one of the finest horses in the



MADAME ADELAIDE'S DRAWING-ROOM

world, whose flame-coloured harness shone with gold, silver, and precious stones. The King, like all the members of his troupe, was armed in the Greek fashion, and wore a cuirass plated with silver and covered with rich embroidery in gold and diamonds. His bearing and all his gestures were worthy of his rank: his helmet, covered with flame-coloured plumes, was worn with incomparable grace; and never did a bolder or a more soldierly air make a mortal superior to other men." Having won admiration by several displays of his prowess, the King left the victory to be decided among the other knights; and the Duc de La Vallière carried off the prize, which was a sword of gold enriched with diamonds and valuable belt-buckles, given by the Queen-Mother, who honoured the victor by presenting it with her own hands.

Night fell: "the camp was lit up, and, all the knights having retired, the Orpheus of our day appeared—you will easily understand that I refer to Lulli—at the head of a large troupe of musicians, who, having approached slowly in time to their instruments, separated into two bands, to right and left of the high daïs, close to the hedges of the circle." Violins played during the entrance of the four seasons, Spring being mounted upon a Spanish horse, while the others rode respectively an elephant, a

camel and a bear. Forty-eight people, dressed suitably to the season they accompanied, bore upon their head basins full of viands and fruit for the banquet. Pan and Diana, supported on a little rock planted with trees, also appeared, with attendants, who offered meats derived from Pan's menagerie and from the hunting of Diana. Pan was represented by Molière. New verses were recited to the Queens, and then the King, Monsieur, the Queens and the ladies sat down at a great table covered with flowers and shaped like a crescent, which was a fine sight.

"In the night, close to the high green hedges, a countless number of chandeliers painted green and silver, each of them furnished with twenty-four candles and two hundred tapers of white wax, and held by an equal number of people in masks, shed a light that was nearly as bright and was more agreeable than that of day. All the riders, with their helmets covered with plumes of various colours and wearing the garments they had worn during the contest, leant upon the barrier; and this large number of richly dressed officers, who waited upon the guests, increased the beauty of the spectacle and made the circle an enchanted scene. After the banquet their Majesties and all the Court went out by the portico opposite the barrier, and in a great num-

ber of much-adorned carriages they returned to the Palace."

On the following day, when night fell, they adjourned to the theatre, which had also been built in a circle of greenery. The plan of this second fête was that Roger and his knights, "after having done wonders in the contests that they had carried on, by order of the beautiful enchantress, for the Queen's pleasure, should continue the same scheme in the next entertainment; and that, since the floating island had not left the coast of France, they should give her Majesty the pleasure of seeing a play of which the scene was laid in Elis." This fiction gave an opportunity for Molière's troupe to act a play, imitated from the Spanish, in five acts, of which only the first was in verse, and which included six interludes. The part of the Princess of Elis was taken by Molière's wife: her husband played a burlesque part of some importance, that of the princess's jester; and the first interlude, in which this cowardly fellow had to defend himself against a bear, produced a great deal of laughter among the company. The interlude that ended the piece was an admirable ballet of fauns, shepherds, and "heroic shepherdesses," "and the whole of this scene, we are told, was so grand, so full of incident, and so agreeable, that nothing finer in the way of ballet has ever been seen."

The evening of May 9 was reserved for the most remarkable performances of Vigarani's machines. In the middle of the lake rose the castle of the enchantress on a rocky island, before which were extended two lines of illuminated rocks, where some tapestry fixed on spars formed the two sides of a sort of stage upon the water. Here the musicians took their places, when the Court was seated near the bank. " But the most surprising thing was to see Alcina coming from behind the rock, carried by a marine monster of prodigious size. Two of the nymphs of her suite started at the same time, and they approached the banks of the lake, and Alcina began some verses, to which her companions responded, and which were composed in praise of the Queen, the King's mother. Two excellent actresses, Mademoiselle de Bric and Molière's wife, represented the nymphs of Alcina, who was Mademoiselle du Parc. When they had finished their recital the monsters took them back " towards the enchanted island where stood the castle, which, opening as they arrived, agreeably surprised the spectators by architectural beauties of so marvellous a nature that they would have been thought to be the creation of Vigarani, if they had not been declared beforehand to be due to Alcina's enchantments. Then the musicians redoubled their harmonious efforts, and there

THE DAUPHIN'S SITTING-ROOM

became visible within the Palace some giants of prodigious size, who performed the first figure of the ballet." There were six figures, during the last of which Roger appeared and received the ring that set him free. At the same instant a clap of thunder followed by lightning marked the end of the enchantress's spell; and the palace of Alcina sank into ruins amid a splendid exhibition of fireworks, the effect of which was doubled by the water which reflected the rockets, and by the echoes which repeated the noise of the mortars.

The pleasures of the enchanted island were over. The King prolonged them for a few days more by entertainments. On May 10 he wished to "hunt heads" in the German fashion. The knights who took part in this game endeavoured to carry off successively, at full gallop, with the lance, the javelin, and the sword, the head of a Turk, of a Moor, and of Medusa. The game took place in the dry moats of the little château. "The whole Court had taken up its position on a balustrade of gilded iron, which ran round the pleasant house of Versailles and overlooked the moat in which the lists had been set up and barricaded." The King carried off the prizes in two contests, but he at once gave back one, which was offered by the Queen to the knights who had been in his troupe: it was a diamond, and the Mar-

quis de Noislin, who won it, received it from the hands of the Queen. On the following day there was an expedition to the Menagerie, where the King demanded admiration for the new buildings he had just built there and for a large number of rare birds. In the evening the King ordered a performance, on a stage in this salon, of *Les Facheux,* by Molière, interspersed with ballets. On the following day after dinner the King made the ladies draw lots for "jewelry, ornaments, silver, and other similar things; and although it is customary for presents of the kind to be distributed by fate, it was no doubt in accordance with His Majesty's desire when the most fortunate number fell into the hands of the Queen." The spectators then saw a challenge exchanged between two of the nobles who had figured in the proceedings of the first day, the Marquis de Soyecourt and the Duc de Saint-Aignan. They tilted for heads in their costumes, and many wagers were laid among their partisans. M. de Saint-Aignan won the contest. "In the evening His Majesty ordered the performance of a comedy called *Tartuffe,* which the Sieur de Molière had written against hypocrites. . . ." It included only the three first acts of a play that was still unknown, but was destined to make some noise in the world. On May 12 the King wished to tilt for heads again, and

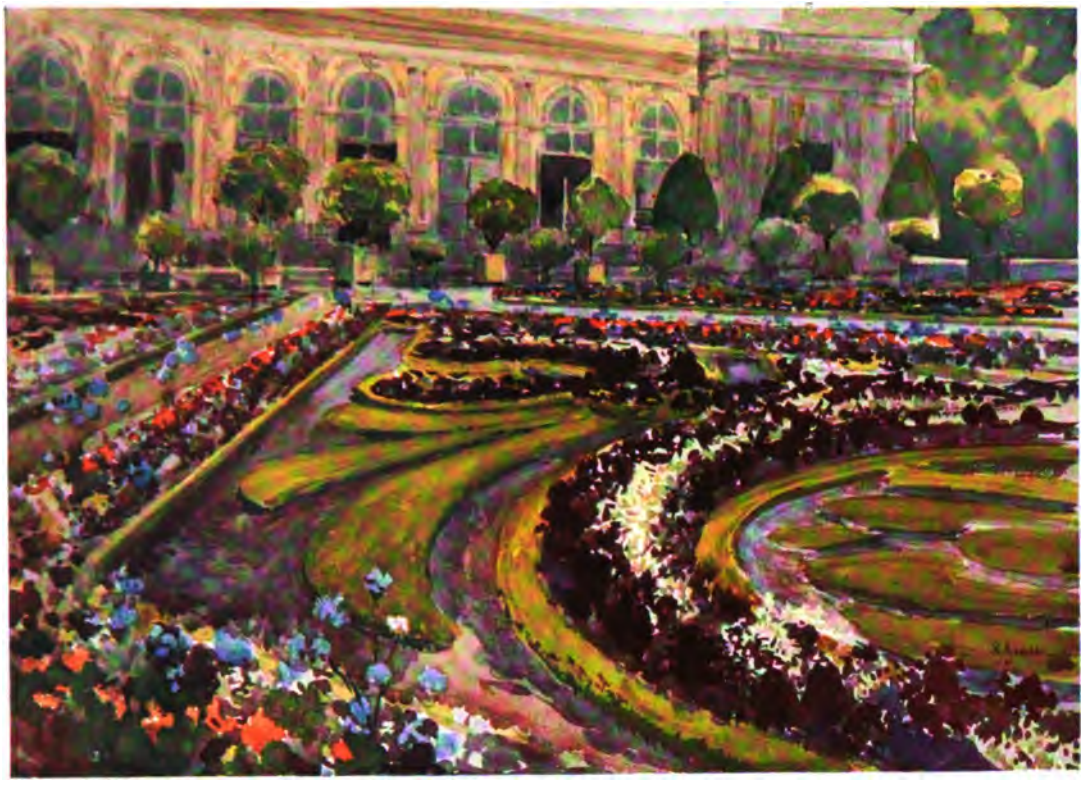
in the evening the comedy of *Le Mariage Forcé* was played. On May 14 the Court started for Fontainebleau.

This series of entertainments had never yet been equalled in the annals of the Court of France; but the little château of Versailles did not at all lend itself to the accommodation of large crowds of courtiers; and the King, while making some happy, had made others discontented. We know this by Madame de Sévigné's first testimony—indirectly given it is true—with regard to Versailles. Oliver d'Ormesson says in his memoirs: "Madame de Sévigné described to us the entertainments at Versailles, which lasted from the Wednesday to the Sunday, and included tilting at the ring, ballets, plays, fireworks, and other very fine conceits; and told us that all the courtiers were in a fury because the King did not take care of any of them, and MM. de Guise and d'Elbeuf had scarely a hole to take shelter in." The village of Versailles, with its inns only fit for carriers, offered few resources, truly, for the courtiers who followed the King. Who would have thought that, twenty years later, a large town would have appeared there?

Some portions of this fête of 1664 were repeated in the following years, which were the most brilliant in the life of the young Court. In 1665, in which

year the King stayed several times at Versailles, and organised hunts, plays, balls, and feasts, a play was given on June 13, followed by a ball in a large salon built of foliage in the Royal Walk by Vigarani, and lighted by a hundred crystal chandeliers. In the month of July the Queen of England, who had come to France for the confinement of Madame, her daughter, paid a visit to Versailles, remaining there for five days with her household, and being magnificently entertained by the King. In September the Court kept the Feast of St. Hubert there, which lasted for four days; there was a great hunting expedition, in which the Queen, Madame, Mademoiselle, Mademoiselle d'Alençon, and the other ladies appeared dressed as Amazons, and a play with a ballet was acted, which was the first performance of Molière's *L'Amour médécin.*

In 1667 the entertainments at the end of the Carnival took place there, and on this occasion there was a repetition of the tilting at heads, and the procession of brilliant knights in those rich and fantastic costumes that Louis XIV. loved to wear. On the day of these revels some of the beauties of the Court were on horseback, "all admirably equipped, and led by Madame, who wore a most superb waistcoat, and was mounted on a white horse caparisoned in brocade, which, like her own habit, was sewn



GRAND TRIANON

with pearls and precious stones. The King followed after, and was easily recognisable, no less by the dignified mien that is peculiar to him, than by his rich Hungarian costume, covered with gold and precious stones, with a helmet to match waving with plumes; and also by the pride of his horse, which seemed more arrogant at carrying so great a monarch than it was of the magnificence of its trappings and the cloth that covered it, which were equally covered with precious stones." Monsieur as a Turk, and the Duc d'Enghien as an Indian, rode near the King, and the nobles followed in six companies. They rode round the camp, which had been arranged in front of the little brick orangery, and after saluting the Queen and the Princesses, who were all handsomely dressed in costume, the King began the tilting and was followed by all the Knights. The game was watched by a great number of foreigners whom the King had invited, and who were seated on the terraces.

It was only natural, after days spent in this way, that Versailles should appear in the public imagination as the place consecrated above all others to Louis XIV.'s fêtes. The reputation that this place had then is well indicated by a contemporary writer. "It is indeed a good and pleasant thing to see the King in this beautiful wilderness, giving little fêtes

prompted by gallantry, or those others that astonish the spectators by their magnificence, by their novelty, by their pomp, by the multitude of brilliant entertainments, by the variety of music, by the water and the fireworks, by the abundance of everything, and above all by the open-air palaces, which are really like enchanted spots in which the union of nature and art is completely unstudied. . . . But any one who saw the King during the campaign in Flanders will admire him a thousand times more among his pleasures than those who never saw him in time of war . . . surprising the first captains in the world by his capacity, charming every one, including the soldiers in the ranks, by his heroic familiarity, going to the trenches with intrepid firmness, resisting fatigue, sleeplessness, and all the most painful circumstances of war, and doing all this with the same ease and the same gaiety with which he arranges the fêtes of Versailles!" It is Mademoiselle de Scudery who writes in this way, thereby faithfully echoing the opinion of the general public, who flattered the young King to excess.

In 1668 Versailles was the scene of Louis XIV.'s grandest fête, the most sumptuous he ever gave. It lasted for one day only, or rather for one night, that of July 18, and it cost more than a hundred thousand French livres. Ten years later the public at

large were enabled to see the principal episode in the fête by means of five large prints engraved by Le Pautre. This shows us that it was remembered for a long time, and indeed it marked the most brilliant moment of Louis XIV.'s youth. It took place two months and a half after the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. The King wished to compensate the Court for the loss of the pleasures of the Carnival, which the war had prevented. He desired at the same time to appear before Madame de Montespan in all the splendour with which the victories of Condé and Luxembourg had invested him. Louise de La Vallière, who was to repent soon after this and become a nun, was still at Court, but already it was to please another than her that the fêtes of Versailles were given.

The King himself chose the parts of the garden that were to be used, and decided upon the entertainments, in which the water that had lately been brought to Versailles at great cost was to be the chief interest. These beautiful waters had contributed more than any other device to the remodelling of the decorations of Versailles; and this was an excellent occasion to show them sparkling everywhere in these lovely gardens where, ten years earlier, nothing was to be seen but marshes. The parts of the various organisers were apportioned to them. The

Duc de Créqui, first gentleman of the Chamber, was charged with all that concerned the stage; the Marshal de Bellefond, first *maitre d'hôtel* to the King, was to manage the banquet and the supper; and Colbert, as superintendent of the King's buildings, was entrusted with the various erections and the fireworks. He distributed the work between the architects of the theatre, the supper-room, and the ball-room.

On the appointed day the King came from Saint Germain to dine at Versailles with the Queen, the Dauphin, Monsieur the King's brother, and Madame (Henrietta of England). The rest of the Court arrived in the afternoon, and the officers of the King's household offered refreshments to every one in the rooms of the ground-floor, the principal ladies being shown to private rooms, where they might rest. At about six o'clock the King, the Queen, and the whole Court went out to the Grand Parterre, and in a moment this charming multitude of beautiful and richly dressed people dispersed into every part of the gardens. With them the King passed in front of the Grotto of Tethys, a marvel of rockwork and playing waters, and went down across the grass to the Basin of the Dragon, to point out the figures of gilded lead that had just been placed there. Then, passing through the groves of young trees, the

PETIT TRIANON: FLOWER GARDEN

shade of which was already fairly thick, they assembled in a sort of labyrinth, the centre of which was arranged as an open-air room, at the junction of five paths.

The basin that was there was covered by five buffets supported by the fountain, of which each presented quite an unexpected appearance: one was a mountain whose caves were filled with various kinds of cold meats; another was a palace built of almond cake and sugared pastry. Between the buffets were vases containing shrubs, which bore preserved fruit. Neither was there any lack of fresh fruit: it was arranged, still growing upon the trees, in hedges along the five paths: in one, pears of all kinds might be picked; in another, Dutch gooseberries; in the third were apricots and peaches; in the fourth, oranges and cherries, and the fifth was bordered throughout its length with Portuguese orange-trees. The most diverse tastes might be satisfied and the eyes, too, were charmed, for at the end of each path a flowered niche was arranged, adorned with the King's cipher, and sheltering gilded figures of sylvan divinities, which were very effective against the green background of the hedges.

After their Majesties had been some time in this charming place and the ladies had refreshed themselves, the King allowed the people who were fol-

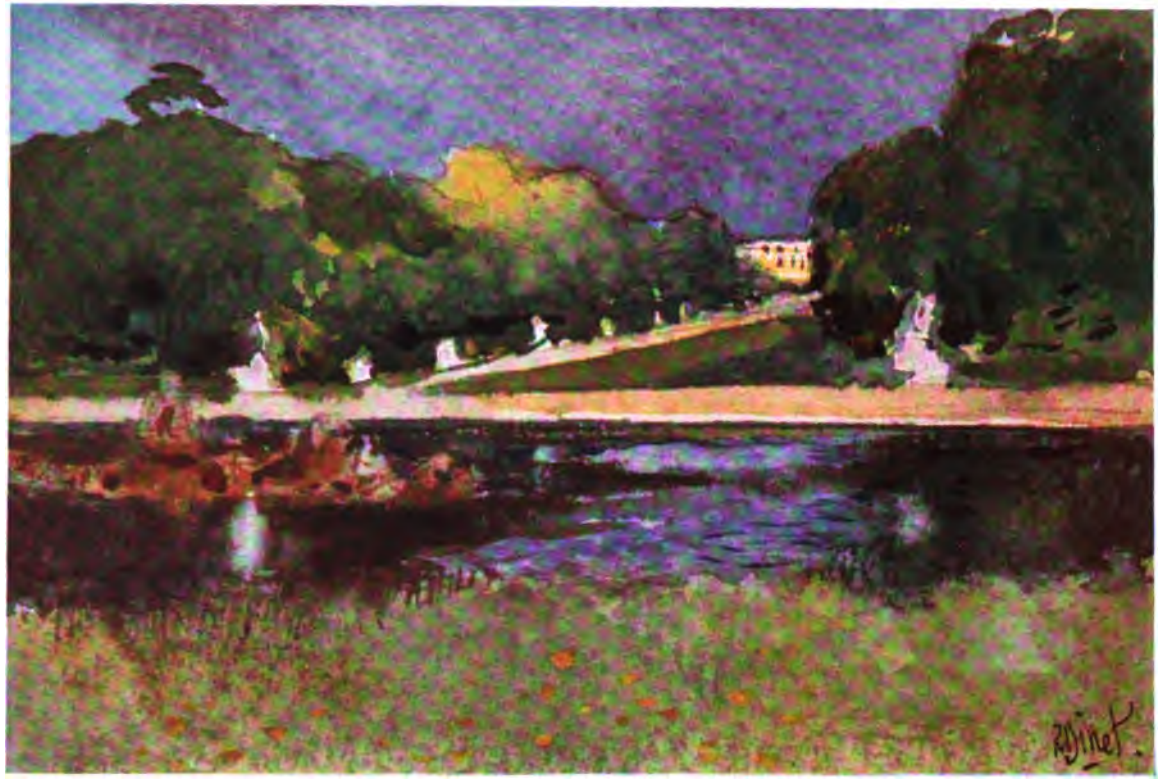
lowing him about to pillage the tables; and the destruction of such a fine display furnished the Court with another very pleasant amusement, on account of the hurry and confusion of those who demolished these castles of almond cake and mountains of preserves. The King then stepped into his *calèche,* the Queen into her chaise, and the Court into carriages, and they drove round the Basin of the Fountain of Swans, which is at the end of the Royal Walk opposite the Palace. Here, though the group of the Car of Apollo was not yet set up, there was a large spout of water composed of a number of jets. Following other paths they arrived at the space where Vigarani had put up the theatre. The hall was capable of holding nearly three thousand spectators. The outside was entirely made of foliage, the inside was hung with the most beautiful tapestry belonging to the Crown, and lighted by thirty-two crystal chandeliers. On the two sides of the stage two statues, Victory and Peace, did homage to the fortunate conqueror of Flanders and Franche-Comté. The first scene in the theatre showed a splendid garden, ornamented with canals and cascades, with a palace and a distant landscape. Refreshments were again offered at the entrance to the theatre: then an amusing *comédie* by Molière was played. The scenery in the theatre was changed several times, and the play

was interwoven with a symphony in several parts, sung by the most beautiful voices, and with various very amusing ballets. The last ballet, in which more than a hundred persons were performing on the stage at the same time, which had never been seen before in France, represented the Triumph of Bacchus, and was set to the music of Lulli. The comedy mentioned above was by Molière, who had taken advantage of the theatrical conventions of the day to mingle the pastoral scenes of the ballet and the final mythological scene with the two acts of a *bourgeois* comedy that was not wanting in gaiety. It treated of the troubles "of a rich peasant married to the daughter of a country gentleman." This was none other than *Georges Dandin.*

On leaving the theatre the Court made its way to another junction of paths in the park, there to watch from afar the illumination of an octagonal room composed of foliage, covered with a dome, and adorned with gilded figures, trophies, and bas-reliefs. The interior of it was a magic scene, with its endless effects of water and light. In the centre of the room a large rock, surmounted by a figure of Pegasus and studded with silver figures of Apollo and the Muses, represented Parnassus: flowing cascades bubbled from its summit, and forming four little rivers ran out upon grassy lawns. The whole building was

made of foliage, with the exception of eight pilasters at the angles, which supported marble shells by which the water was returned. The cornice supported porcelain vases full of flowers, alternately with large crystal balls, and from it garlands of flowers were suspended by scarves of silver gauze. Opposite the entrance was the principal buffet in an arbour of considerable size, and on it was the King's most beautiful china and plate, with twenty-four enormous basins of chased silver, divided from each other by as many large silver vases, cressets, and candelabra. There were also some high silver stands, recently made at the Gobelins, on which were other candelabra lighted with ten candles of white wax. The King took up his position in front of the rock, round which tables had been arranged to accommodate sixty people.

The banquet was of five courses, each of fifty-six large dishes! In the neighbouring paths the Queen's private table was laid under awnings, and many other tables were prepared for the ladies. There were three for the ambassadors in the Grotto of Tethys, and there were other profusely laden tables in various parts of the park, where any one might eat. We will only mention the table of the Duchesse de Montausier, at which were seated Madame de Montespan, the beautiful Madame de Ludres, Mademoiselle de



THE BASIN OF APOLLO

Scudery and Madame Scarron, afterwards Madame de Maintenon. To the King's table, where the Duchesse de la Vallière was seated, the Marquis de Sévigné had been invited with her daughter, afterwards Madame de Grignan.

The King, having risen from the table, left the room by a portico that faced the Palace, and in a couple of hundred paces reached the ballroom. This was not, like the supper-room, made of foliage, but was a magnificent eight-walled building, faced outside and in with marble and porphyry, and ornamented with garlands of flowers. "There is no palace in the world," cried Mademoiselle de Scudery, "that has a room so fine, so large, so high, and so superb." There were six rows of seats arranged in the form of an amphitheatre, the back of which was a grotto of rockwork. The decorative figures in plaster or pasteboard, at which the good sculptors of the King's buildings had worked their best, represented Arion, Orpheus singing among the nymphs, and eight women, who held in their hands various instruments on which they seemed to be playing the dance-music for the ball. It was here that the effect of the water was most curious. It flowed from the pedestals of the statues, from the back of the grottoes, and all along a path that opened out on one side of the hall. This path, which was flanked by little

rooms with termini standing at their entrances, appeared to go back a long way. Quite at the end there was a grotto of rocks with gilded figures of marine deities, in which were some fine sheets of water, which, after falling into several successive basins, divided into two, and flowed along the path in two channels of marble, to be united once more in a basin at the entrance of the salon. A large jet of water in the basin, and sixteen smaller ones, gushed from the channels and helped to enhance the effect. The splendour of the hall was worthy of its surroundings. There was a marvellous effect of crystal chandeliers and pyramids of candles in that great hall, where the brilliancy of the waters emulated the beauty of the lights, and the sound of the fountains harmonised with the violins.

A still more astonishing spectacle brought the fête to an end. After the ball the King and Court climbed the steps of the Horse-shoe round the Basin of Latona, and found there some magnificent illuminations, for which no visible preparations during the day had prepared the spectators. "After having passed along several paths whose comparative darkness served to increase the brilliancy of the sight that followed, and on arriving at a magnificent terrace whence both the Palace and the terraces that form an amphitheatre of gardens are visible, the spectators

saw a prodigious change which had taken place in everything. It may be affirmed that no night was ever made so beautiful and so brilliant as that one. For indeed the Palace seemed to be a veritable Palace of the Sun, for it was luminous everywhere, and all the windows seemed to be filled with the most beautiful statues of antiquity, but statues that were luminous and of various colours, which shed a great light." All the balustrades and terraces of the different gardens, which were usually bordered with porcelain vases filled with flowers, were now edged with vases that blazed with light, which ornamented, and at the same time, lit up the vast extent of the parterres. In addition to the statues of the Palace and the vases of the terraces and the balustrades, there appeared in the gardens below rows of glowing termini, luminous colossal figures, statues and caducei twined with fire, etc.

We will again quote a contemporary narrative: "As though it were not enough to charm the eye with the illumination of so many stationary objects, the crash of a thousand mortars was suddenly heard, and was followed by a thousand jets of fireworks, which were seen rising from the basins, the fountains, the flower-beds, the green woods, and a hundred different places. The two elements, water and fire, were so closely mingled together that it was impossible to

distinguish them. When a thousand flames were seen issuing from the earth and rising in every direction, it seemed possible that there were as many canals spurting fire that night as had supplied jets of water during the day. This surprise created a pleasant disturbance among the spectators, and only lasted long enough to imprint upon the mind a fine impression of what water and fire can do when they meet and contend with one another. Then every one, thinking that this marvellous show of fireworks must be the end of the fête, was returning towards the Palace, when suddenly the sky was filled with flashes and the air with a noise that seemed to make the earth shake. Every one stood still to see this fresh surprise, and immediately a huge number of large rockets shot into the air. There were even some that marked out the King's cipher as they turned and twisted, tracing the double L brilliantly in the air in vivid and clear light." At last all these lights were extinguished, when the day, "jealous of the advantages of so beautiful a night," began to appear.

Such was the fête of 1668, the first apotheosis of Versailles. Almost immediately afterwards the order was given to remodel the house and its gardens. It was at this period that the young King began to dream of preparing a more glorious future for Versailles, and of moving the Court and Government

BASIN OF NEPTUNE

thither. When he had realised this desire the fêtes at Versailles became more numerous, and formed one of the chief titles to fame of the French Court, which was envied by foreign Courts for its magnificence and good taste, and was imitated by all. The fêtes of Louis XIV., and, later on, those of Louis XV., were copied, in the same way that palaces and gardens in imitation of those at Versailles were built everywhere in Europe, and especially in the principalities of Germany.

Every year the Carnival was the chief occasion for rejoicings. The masked balls given by the King, the Dauphin (Monseigneur), the princes, and some of the great *seigneurs,* were frequent and gave much pleasure. The gazettes spread detailed accounts of them in the provinces and abroad. During the Carnival of 1683, which we will mention as an example, five large and remarkable balls were given in five different suites of apartments in Versailles. The first was given by the Grand Écuyer; Monseigneur appeared there at first carried in a chair and accompanied by a large number of Punches and dwarfs; then he went away and changed his costume, and reappeared four times with his suite, in different disguises.

It was he himself who gave the second Court ball in the Hall of the Guards, which served as an

ante-room to his apartments. Monsieur le Duc, son of the great Condé, gave the third, which was magnificent. Lulli, dressed as a Moor, beat time and conducted the King's violinists, who were also dressed as Moors. Presently Bacchus and Silenus appeared, and the goat belonging to Bacchus' suite. Silenus was represented as a harlequin mounted on a donkey, which was caparisoned with vine-branches and grapes; while Bacchus, whose part was played by a professional comedian, was covered with hams, sausages, bottles, etc., and was carried on a barrel by two satyrs. Bacchus and Silenus made a very agreeable diversion, and finally they quarrelled, while the donkey and the goat began to fight, which amused the spectators very much.

A few days afterwards it devolved upon the Cardinal de Bouillon in his turn to receive the Court. He was Grand Almoner of France, and in this capacity was a great dignitary of the Crown. Finally, the fifth and last ball was given by the witty Marquise de Thianges, Madame de Montespan's sister.

Among other masquerades that amused the guests was the entrance of "some mantelpiece ornaments," consisting of seven pieces of porcelain. There were pots and grotesque figures from China. These pieces of porcelain were represented by persons

of the first rank; and one may see here a sign of the fashion that was then coming in for curiosities from the Far East.

At one of the masked balls of 1685 the Dauphin arrived in the dress of a mountebank, and on simply pulling a little cord he instantly appeared in the garments of a Chinese grandee. Every year new developments and new masquerades were invented, with the help of Bérain, the clever organiser of the King's *Menus-Plaisirs*. For the rest, all the Carnivals were alike, and it is enough to have given some interesting examples of the customs of the Court. We will merely mention that on February 24, 1699, three thousand masks were counted in Monsieur's apartment, and in 1700 the Duchesse de Maine, being about to be confined and obliged to stay in bed, gave twenty balls in her own room during the Carnival.

The same customs prevailed at the *bals parés* or *rangés* as at the masked balls, which were always subject to very severe rules and regulations, at all events under Louis XIV., and were really artistic spectacles. The company were arranged in the form of an oblong: on one side of it was the King's arm-chair (or three arm-chairs when the King and Queen of England were present), and in a line with him on each side was the royal family, down to the rank of

the grandson of France inclusively. Sometimes in the confusion of the ball the Princesses of the Blood, on the pretext of speaking to some one at the side or at the back, would come up and take the places at the end. The ladies of the Queen's household in order of precedence, those with titles first and then the others, occupied the two long sides to right and left. Opposite the King were the dancers, the Princes of the Blood, and others. All the ladies seated in the oblong had to dance, in accordance with an order issued by the King. The Princes of the Blood, who did not dance at all, were seated with the courtiers behind the ladies; and in the case of masked balls every one at first stood with face uncovered, mask in hand. Some time after the ball had begun, if there were to be fresh entries or changes of costume, those concerned left the room in different parties, and returned masked, so that no one could tell afterwards who any particular person was.

Dancing in those days was a difficult and serious affair. A great deal of study, a great deal of taste, and beauty as well, were required to give grace to the stiff and formal movements of the pavane and the minuet; and to be a good performer in these dances, which were always very serious and altogether lacking in quick motion, and were composed of steps in every direction, and majestic curtseys. The best in-

PARTERRE OF LATONA

structed ladies in this art were summoned to the Court, and among the princesses who excelled in it was the young Duchesse de Bourgogne.

After the Carnival came Lent, which was kept very strictly by order of the King. All fêtes and amusements came to an end, and were replaced by numerous pious exercises and sermons, among others the severe sermons of Bourdaloue against excessive card-playing, which was the greatest evil of the Court, and in which the princes and princesses themselves too often gave a bad example.

Throughout the year the Court had its reception days, a custom that was not yet established in any other Court in Europe, and served as an example to other sovereigns. On the occasions called the *appartement* the whole Court was assembled from six or seven o'clock in the evening until ten, the hour at which the King went to supper. These gatherings took place in the great reception-rooms extending from one of the salons at the upper end of the Grand Gallery to the vicinity of the gallery of the Chapel, which occupied until 1710 the space where Louis XV. made the Hall of Hercules. "The King," says the *Mercure Galant,* "grants admission to his great apartments at Versailles on the Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday of every week, for the playing of every sort of game, and these days are called *jours d'ap-*

partement. All the guests arrive at the hour appointed for their reception in these superb rooms. No one presents himself without knowing beforehand that he is assured of admission. Some choose one game and others are attracted by another; others again only wish to watch the games, while there are those who prefer to walk about, admiring the scene and the splendour of the great rooms. Although these are filled with people no one is to be seen there who is not of distinguished rank, whether man or woman. Every one is permitted to talk, and the guests make conversation together as they choose. Respect, nevertheless, demands that no one should raise his voice too much, and thus there is no excessive noise. The King, the Queen, and all the Royal House condescend from their dignified position to play games with many of the guests who have never experienced such an honour. The sovereign goes from one game to another; he does not wish any one to rise at his approach, nor to interrupt the game. When the players are tired of one game they play another. Then they listen to music or watch while others dance; they converse together; they go into the refreshment-room or the supper-room. The manner in which they are waited upon is more agreeable than is customary, so assiduous are the servants who stand behind the card-tables, and hand the cards, the

counters, and anything required by the players. . . ."

Here we see the beginning of those usages of good society which were gradually to become the custom in every Court of Europe, and were at last to be the rule in every circle of distinction. The customs of polite society were about to undergo a real transformation, to which the charm and refinement of the Court of France contributed not a little.

Chapter Six

HOW LOUIS XIV. SPENT HIS DAY AT VERSAILLES; HIS HABITS AND HIS CHARACTER

THERE is a certain curiosity attaching to the details of the life of that sovereign whom the French justly call the "*Grand Roi*," who is chiefly interesting to us in this book as the creator of Versailles. We like to know how he lived, how he passed his days, and how his friends and subjects were permitted to see him and approach him. The memoirs of the day, the journal of the Marquis de Dangeau, and above all the famous writings of the Duc de Saint-Simon, supply us with all the information necessary to satisfy our curiosity. With their help we will describe how Louis XIV. spent an entire day towards the second part of his reign—a simple, ordinary day, without any Court functions or exceptional ceremonies, by which we shall see more plainly what Saint-Simon calls the "mechanism" of the King's life. This account will teach us at the same time the uses of the different

rooms in the Palace, and will be of considerable value to such as visit Versailles in the desire of forming a mental picture of life in the past.

At eight o'clock the first *valet-de-chambre* for the quarter, who was the only attendant who slept in the King's room, drew back the curtains by which the bed was entirely surounded, and woke his Majesty. The first physician, the first surgeon, and the woman who was his nurse as long as she lived, entered the room at the same time. The nurse embraced him, and the others rubbed him, and often changed his shirt. At a quarter past eight the Grand Chamberlain was summoned, or in his absence the First Gentleman of the Chamber for the year, together with the courtiers and people of importance who had the right of the *grandes entrées.* The Grand Chamberlain or First Gentleman drew the curtains, which had been closed again, and presented the holy water from the vessel at the head of the bed. These gentlemen were there for a little time, and this was their opportunity for speaking to the King if they had anything to say to him or to ask; in which case the others went away. When there was no one who wished to speak to him, as was most usual, they only stayed a few moments. The one who had drawn the curtains and presented the holy water, presented the book of the Office of the Holy Ghost, and then they all passed out into the

Council Room. As soon as he had read this very short office the King called to them, and they returned. The same official gave him his dressing-gown, and meanwhile the *secondes entrées* took place, followed a few minutes later by the *entrées de la Chambre*. The most distinguished persons entered first, and then every one else, and found the King putting on his shoes and stockings, for he did nearly everything for himself, both skilfully and gracefully. Every second day they watched him shaving; and at this time he always wore a short little peruke, for he never at any time, even in bed when he had taken medicine, appeared in public without a peruke. He often spoke of the chase, and sometimes he addressed a word or two to some one. There was no toilet-table near him; a looking-glass was simply held up before him.

As soon as he was dressed he said his prayers by the bedside, and all the clergy who were present, and any cardinals who had no special distinction, fell upon their knees. All the laymen remained standing, and the Captain of the Guard stood near the railing during the prayers of the King, who afterwards passed out into his Cabinet. This room was restored and enlarged under Louis XV. There he found all those who had the right of admission to the Cabinet except those who followed him in. This right was very

widely enjoyed on account of the number of officials, all of whom possessed it. There he gave every one his orders for the day; and thus it was known how the King intended to spend nearly every minute of the day from morning to evening. Every one then left the room, except the King's illegitimate sons, MM. de Montchevreuil and d'O, who had been their tutors, and the architect Mansart, who had been appointed Superintendent of Buildings. Later on he was succeeded by the Duc d'Autin in this important post. The King liked at this hour to talk over the works and buildings that he was continually ordering at his various châteaux and to inspect the plans, which he discussed and corrected. Every one, at this hour of the morning, entered the King's Cabinet, not through the bedroom, but by "the back way," through the rooms of the Valets of the Inner Apartments. This was a pleasant time for all who were admitted to the Cabinet, and was the time when all the schemes for the gardens and buildings were thought out. It lasted for a longer or shorter time according to the King's business.

Meantime the whole Court was waiting in the Great Gallery. The Captain of the Guard was alone in the bedroom, seated at the door of the Cabinet. He was told when the King wished to go to Mass, and then he entered the Cabinet.

It was during this interval that the King gave audiences, if he had granted any, or if he wished to speak to any one, and also gave secret audiences to foreign ministers, in the presence of M. de Torcy, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. These audiences were only called *secret* to distinguish them from those that were held unceremoniously at the King's bedside after he had said his prayers, which were called *private* audiences, and also from those of ceremony, which were also accorded to ambassadors.

The King left the room by the door of looking-glass that led into the Gallery, and passing through the State apartments, followed by his courtiers, he went to hear Mass, at which his choir always sang a motet. He sat in the large gallery on a level with the apartments, and only went down into the choir on days of festival or on ceremonious occasions. As he walked to and from the Chapel any one who wished might speak to him freely after having applied to the Captain of the Guard, except in the case of distinguished people, who might address him without intervention. The King returned to his private rooms by the same door in the Gallery. While he was hearing Mass the ministers were summoned, and assembled in the King's room, where people of distinction could go up and talk to them on matters of business or pleasure. The King's leisure, after he returned from

Mass, was very short, and almost at once he summoned his Council. This was the end of what was called the *matinée.*

The King worked a great deal and very conscientiously at affairs of State, to assist him in which he had succeeded in surrounding himself with the most able ministers and councillors. Nearly every day of the week he held a long council in his Cabinet. On Sunday there was a Council of State, and often on Monday also; on Tuesday a financial council; on Wednesday a Council of State; and on Saturday a financial council. Thursday morning was nearly always free. This was the day when the King gave audiences, most commonly audiences of which the Court did not know, the favoured person being introduced by the "back way." This was also a great day for the King's illegitimate sons, and for the building department and the Valets of the Inner Rooms, because the King had nothing to do. On Friday after Mass was the time for the King's confession, which had no limits and might last until dinner-time. The influence exercised over the King in these interviews by the famous Jesuit, Père de la Chaise, is well known.

The King nearly always ate his dinner *au petit couvert,* that is to say alone in his room, at a square table opposite the middle window. It was more or

less abundant; for in the morning he ordered *petit couvert* or *très-petit couvert.* Even the latter always consisted of many dishes, and of three courses as well as a dessert of fruit. As soon as the meal was served the principal courtiers entered, and after them every one who was at all known. Then the first Gentleman of the Chamber went to summon the King, and waited upon him if the Grand Chamberlain was not present.

Saint-Simon says that he very rarely saw the Dauphin (Monseigneur) and his sons at these private dinners, and that the King never asked them to sit down. The Princes of the Blood and the cardinals were often there, and Monsieur the King's brother fairly often, when he came from his château at Saint-Cloud to see the King, or after he had been attending the *Conseil des Dépeches,* the only council in which he took part. He handed a napkin to the King, and remained standing. Presently the King, seeing that he did not go away, asked him if he would not sit down; he bowed, and the King ordered a seat to be brought for him. A stool was placed behind him, and after a few moments the King said to him: "*Mon frère,* pray sit down." He bowed, and remained seated until the end of the meal, when he again gave a napkin to the King. At other times, when he came from Saint-Cloud, the King when he

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sat down would order a place to be laid for Monsieur, or would ask him if he would not like some dinner. If he declined the honour he went away a moment afterwards without there being any question of giving him a seat; if he accepted, the King ordered a place to be laid for him. The table was square, and Monsieur sat at one side, with his back to the Cabinet.

Then the Grand Chamberlain or the first Gentleman of the Chamber filled Monsieur's glass and handed plates to him, and removed those that he put aside, as he did for the King; but Monsieur received all these attentions with marked politeness, showing by his behaviour that in the King's presence, although he was his brother, he was conscious of his very inferior position. If the Princes of the Blood attended the King's *lever,* as they sometimes did, they performed the duties of the first Gentleman of the Chamber themselves, and when it was to Monsieur that this honour fell he showed great satisfaction. When he dined with the King he talked a good deal and enlivened the conversation very much. Although seated at the table he handed the napkin to the King at the beginning and end of the meal. The King, although he spoke a few words now and then, generally talked very little while at his dinner, unless some of the nobles who were his special friends were

present. With them he talked a little more, as he did at his *lever.*

The dinner *au grand couvert* was extremely rare, and only occurred on the occasion of grand fêtes, or sometimes at Fontainebleau, when the Queen of England was there. No lady but one, and she very seldom, came to the private dinners. The exception was the Maréchale de la Mothe-Houdancourt, who had been the King's governess. As soon as she appeared a seat was brought for her, and she sat down, for she was a duchess by letters patent, and had the right of the *tabouret,* the right, that is to say, of sitting down in the presence of the King and Queen. On leaving the table, Louis XIV. at once returned to his Cabinet. This was one of the moments when persons of distinction might speak to him. He paused for a moment to listen; then he entered, and very rarely some one followed him, but never without asking permission, which very few dared to do.

Then he took up his position, with the man who followed him, in the embrasure of the window nearest to the door of the Cabinet, which was immediately closed, and which the man who was talking to the King opened for himself when he went out. At this hour the King was again visited by his children and the Valets of the Inner Rooms, and sometimes by the

architects of the building department, who waited in the rooms at the back. The chief physician was always present at the dinner and followed the King into his Cabinet. Monseigneur came at this hour too, if he had not seen the King in the morning. He entered and left by the door into the Galley. Thus we see that the habits and the rights of every one were minutely regulated.

It amused the King to feed his setters, and he stayed with them for a certain time; then he asked for the attendants connected with the Wardrobe, and changed his clothes in the presence of the very small number of distinguished people whom it pleased the First Gentleman of the Chamber to admit. Immediately afterwards the King went out through the rooms at the back and down his private staircase into the Marble Court to his carriage. As he walked from the foot of this staircase to the carriage any one who would might speak to him, and this was also the case as he returned.

The King was extremely fond of fresh air, and when he was deprived of it he suffered in health, being subject to headaches and depression caused by his former excessive use of perfumes; indeed, he had once carried their abuse so far that for many years he had not been able to endure any scent but that of orange-flowers, and the courtiers and ladies had to

be extremely careful to use none, in case they should be obliged to go near him.

As he was very insensible to differences in temperature, and even to rain, it was only when the weather was especially inclement that he was prevented from going out every day. His outings had only three objects: first, hunting the stag with his pack of hounds, which he did once a week, and often more, when he was staying at his châteaux of Marly and Fontainebleau in the summer: secondly, shooting in his park, and there was no man in France who could shoot so accurately, so skilfully, and with such grace. This also he did once or twice during the week, especially on the Sundays and fête-days on which he did not wish to have a great hunting expedition. Thirdly, on the other days he went to watch the workmen at their work, and to walk in his gardens and buildings. Sometimes he made expeditions with ladies, and gave them refreshments in some grove of Versailles, or in the forest of Marly or of Fontainebleau. He liked also to go with his whole Court round the Grand Canal, and this was a splendid sight, when some of the courtiers were on horseback. On his other expeditions he was only followed by those whose offices were important and brought them near to his person. Sometimes there was a large number of courtiers when he walked in the gardens of Versailles—when

only he wore a hat—or in those of Trianon, but this was only when he slept at Trianon and stayed there for several days. This was also the case at Marly; but if he were staying there all who were taking part in the expedition were quite at liberty to follow him about the gardens, to join him there, to leave him there; in short, to enjoy their visit in any way they liked.

There was one privilege which was the custom at this place, Marly, and at no other. On leaving the château the King said aloud: "Your hats, gentlemen!" and instantly the courtiers, the officers of the bodyguard, and the officials of the building department, placed their hats on their heads, whether they were in front of the King or behind him, or beside him, and he would have taken it ill if any one had even, not omitted, but delayed to put on his hat. This state of things lasted throughout the expedition, that is to say, for four or five hours sometimes in summer. He often had something to eat early at Versailles in order to go to Marly merely for the day. With its delicious gardens Marly was thus a kind of annexe to the principal royal dwelling.

Stag-hunting was one of the chief amusements of the Court. At Fontainebleau any one might take part in it who wished; but elsewhere, and especially in the "great park" of Versailles, only those courtiers

might join in it who had obtained permission once for all, and those who possessed the uniform jacket, which was blue trimmed with gold and silver lace, one stripe of silver between two of gold, and was lined with red. There was a fairly large number of them, but they never hunted in more than one party at a time, who came together by chance. The King liked to have a certain number of companions, but too many worried him, and spoilt the hunt. He liked people to enjoy the chase, but he did not wish them to hunt without enjoying it; he thought that was ridiculous, and he bore no grudge against those who never hunted.

It was the same with regard to gambling. He liked the play in the salon of Marly to be high, and continual. They played lansquenet chiefly, but there were a great many tables arranged for other games in different parts of the salon. At Fontainebleau, when the weather was bad, it gave him great pleasure to watch good performers at tennis, in which he had formerly excelled, and at Marly he liked to watch the game of mall, in which he had also been very skilful. There was a *Mall,* too, in the gardens of Versailles.

Sometimes, on days when there was no Council held, and he was at Versailles, he would go to dine at Marly or Trianon with Madame Le Duchesse de

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Bourgogne, Madame de Maintenon, and other ladies, and this occurred much more frequently during the last years of life. In the summer the minister who was to work with him arrived as he rose from the table, and after the work was finished he spent his time until the evening in walking or driving with ladies, or playing games with them, or fairly often in getting up a lottery for them, in which every one drew a winning number. Thus it was really a graceful way of giving them presents, apportioned by chance, of things for their personal use, such as pieces of stuff or silk, or jewels varying in beauty in order to leave more to chance. Madame de Maintenon drew lots like the others, and nearly always gave her winnings away instantly; but the King did not draw. It was not only on these occasions that there were lotteries, but often also when the King was dining with Madame de Maintenon. The idea of these dinners was slow in coming to him, and for a long time they occurred very rarely, but later on they took place once a week, with ladies with whom he was intimate, and were accompanied by music and card-playing. At the lotteries there were only the ladies of the Palace, and those with whom he was on familiar terms.

In the summer the King worked in his own rooms with his ministers, on leaving the table; and when

the days began to shorten he worked in the evening in Madame de Maintenon's rooms.

When he was returning from his drive any one might speak to him who wished, as he walked from his carriage to the foot of his private staircase. He changed his clothes as before, and then remained in his Cabinet, where his friends and the Valets of the Inner Rooms were able to approach him quite at their ease. For these intervals, which occurred three times in the day, were given up to them, and to those who brought him reports, either verbal or in writing. It was also the time when the King wrote, if he had any writing to do for himself. On returning from his drives he remained in his rooms for an hour or more: then he went to the rooms of Madame de Maintenon, and on his way thither any one might address him who would.

This daily visit to Madame de Maintenon filled a large place in the thoughts of the Court. Her rooms were on the same floor as those of the King. The great bedroom of the Marquise was lighted by three windows, and was very large. The King's arm-chair was on one side of the fireplace, and before him was a campstool for the minister who came every day to work with him. On the other side of the fireplace was a recess hung with red damask, and an arm-chair in which sat Madame de Maintenon

with a little table before her. She never interfered with the work of the King and his ministers: her influence, which was nearly always good, was perfectly discreet. Very often the young Duchesse de Bourgogne, with one or two of her favourite ladies, came to visit "her aunt," and the princess's bright and animated conversation cheered the old King. More than once the conversation concerned the plays that the Duchesse acted before the King in a neighbouring room, where also the young ladies of Saint-Cyr played Racine's tragedy of *Esther*. These plays were of great interest to the King, to Monseigneur, and to those privileged persons who were admitted on rare occasions. (They took place in the room where the portrait of Madam de Maintenon with her young niece now hangs, in the background of which picture the artist has placed the House of Education for poor girls of noble birth, founded at Saint-Cyr near Versailles by Madame de Maintenon.)

Before the King's supper-hour, Madame de Maintenon's servants brought in her soup and laid her table. She ate her supper in the presence of the King, who went on with his work. The meal was very short; the table was removed; and the Marquise's women undressed her quickly and put her to bed. As soon as the King was told that his supper was ready, he rose, approached Madame de Main-

tenon's bed, said good-night to her, and returned to his own rooms for supper.

It was at ten o'clock that the King's supper was served. The *maître d'hôtel,* wand in hand, went to announce the fact to the Captain of the Guard in Madame de Maintenon's ante-room, where that officer had just taken up his position. None but the captains of the guard were admitted to this ante-chamber, which was very small, and was between the room in which the King and Madame de Maintenon sat, and another very small ante-room assigned to the officers. The greater number of the courtiers waited at the door of the suite, on the landing of the marble staircase. The Captain of the Guard stood on the threshold of the room, and told the King that his supper was ready, returning immediately to the ante-room. A quarter of an hour afterwards the King went to supper, which was always in public, and as he went from Madame de Maintenon's ante-room to his own table any one might speak to him who wished to do so.

This meal was always in public, with the royal house, that is to say only the sons and daughters of the Crown, and the grandsons and granddaughters of the Crown. A great number of courtiers were present, and of ladies, of whom as many were sitting as standing, and two evenings before the expeditions to

Marly all those who wished to take part in it were present also. This was called "applying for Marly." The men applied in the morning of the same day, by simply saying to the King: "Sire, Marly." During his last years this wearied the King; and the page on duty wrote down in the gallery the names of those who applied there. The ladies, however, continued to apply in person to the King for the much coveted favour of a visit to Marly.

After supper the King stood for a few moments with his back to the railing at the foot of his bed, surrounded by his whole Court; then, bowing to the ladies, he passed out into his private sitting-rooms, where he gave his orders. Here he spent a little less than an hour with his children and grandchildren, both legitimate and otherwise, and their husbands and wives, who all assembled in one of the Inner Rooms. The King sat in one arm-chair and Monsieur in another, for in private they lived on brotherly terms. The Dauphin (Monseigneur), and all the other princes, remained standing, and the princesses sat on stools. Madame le Duchesse d'Orléans was admitted after the death of Madame la Dauphine. This family gathering was augmented by those who were sufficiently familiar to come in through the rooms at the back, and by the inevitable Valets of the Inner Room.

The princesses' ladies of honour, and the ladies of the palace on duty for the day, waited meanwhile in the Council Room, which at Versailles was next to the room in which the King sat. At Fontainebleau, where there was but one large sitting-room, the ladies of the princesses who were seated completed the circle, in the same row as the princesses and on similar stools, while the other ladies remained at the back, and were at liberty to stand or to sit on the floor without ceremony, which a good many of them did. The conversation was only on the subject of hunting, or some other indifferent topic.

The King, when he wished to retire, fed his dogs; then said good-night and went into his room, where he said his prayers by the bedside as in the morning, and then undressed. He said good-night by inclining his head, and while every one was leaving the room he remained standing at the corner of the chimney-piece, where he gave his orders to the colonel of the guard alone. Then began the *petit coucher,* at which those who had the *grande entrée* and the *seconde entrée* were present. This ceremony was very short. The courtiers did not leave the room till the King was in bed, and this was one of the moments when privileged people might address him. When it was seen that some one wished to speak to the King, every one else went out of the room and

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left them together. Thus the day ended; a day full of activities, in which everything had a place; religious duty, the care of affairs of State, the patronage of the arts, the private interests of the Court, and family affection.

We can now see why Louis XIV. created Versailles, with its new town, and the multitude of dwellings in the Palace and its dependencies, in which the King was able to lodge as many as ten thousand people! In order to hold his magnificent Court it was necessary for him to have the whole nobility within reach. Moreover, his action was the result of profoundly politic calculation, for he had never forgotten the dangers run by his throne and even by his person during his minority, at the time of the civil war of the Fronde, when the nobility of France had rebelled against the authority of the Crown. Versailles was created with the object of domesticating these over-powerful and turbulent nobles, of separating them from their lands and subjecting them to the King, of binding them to him by golden chains, by a multiplication of honourable offices, and by giving them a taste for the pleasures of a magnificent Court. This method succeeded admirably, and the sons of the rebels were all brilliant courtiers and generals faithful to the King and very proud of the rank and honours accorded to them in the ceremonies of Ver-

sailles. Louis XIV.'s pride was satified, and he took good care that no one should evade the new duties that he had laid upon the whole nobility of the kingdom.

He liked to be seen, explains the Duc de Saint-Simon in the passage that describes Louis XIV.'s character, and he was anxious to be admired and loved. He not only desired the constant presence of people of noble birth, but he wished for that of every one else also. He looked to right and left at his *lever,* at his *coucher,* at his meals, as he passed from one room to another, and as he walked in the gardens of Versailles, where alone the courtiers were at liberty to follow him. He went deeply into their reasons for absenting themselves, whether the cause were general or particular, and those who were hardly ever present were disgraced. When he was requested for something in the name of such a man he would answer proudly: "I do not know him." Or again: "He is a man I never see." These decisions were irrevocable. He could not endure people who enjoyed being in Paris. He was comparatively lenient with those who loved their places in the country, but nevertheless it behoved them to return very quickly, and if they were to be absent for any length of time to show themselves conspicuously before they went.

No one ever granted favours with a better grace, or increased the value of his benefits more generously in this way. No one ever understood so well how to make his words, his smiles, even his glances, valued. He made everything precious by his discrimination and dignity; the brevity and rarity of his speech added greatly to its worth. The person he addressed was looked at by every one in the room. The distinction became the subject of conversation, and the object of it was treated with a certain amount of consideration. It was the same with every attention, distinction, or preference shown by the King, who was not at all lavish of such favours. He never allowed himself to say a disagreeable word; if he had to find fault, or reprimand or correct any one, which was extremely rare, he always did so with a certain degree of kindness, hardly ever sternly and never angrily.

He was a man of the greatest natural courtesy, of a courtesy of every shade and degree; for none paid more attention than he to distinctions of age, merit, and rank. He marked these different distinctions very carefully in his way of greeting people and acknowledged their bows as they entered or left the room. His different ways of acknowledging salutes at the head of his troops, whether at the front or at reviews, were really admirable. With woman his bearing was incomparable. He never passed any

kind of coif, even if it were worn by a servant-girl, without raising his hat. When meeting ladies he uncovered altogether, but at varying distances; for titled people he raised his hat and held it in the air or close to his ear for a few moments in a more or less marked way. For *seigneurs* he considered it enough to put his hand to his hat. For Princes of the Blood he removed it in the same way as for ladies. If he spoke to ladies he never placed his hat on his head till he had left them. All this relates to when he was out of doors, for in the house he was always uncovered. His bows, more or less marked but always slight, were incomparably graceful, as was his way of half rising from his seat at the supper-table whenever a duchess entered. He did this for no other lady, nor yet for the Princes of Blood, and when he grew old this custom tired him, though he never gave it up. The ladies, therefore, were careful not to enter the room after he had begun his supper. In the same way he showed a distinction in his acceptance of services from Monsieur, the Duc d'Orléans, and the Princes of the Blood.

If he were kept waiting for anything while he was dressing he always waited patiently; he was always punctual to the hours he gave for the arrangements of the day; his orders were always given with precision, clearness, and brevity. If, in the bad winter

weather when he could not go out, he went to Madame de Maintenon's rooms a quarter of an hour earlier than the time he had appointed, and the captain of the guard were not at his post, he never omitted to say on his return that it was his own fault for having altered the hour, and not the fault of the captain for being absent. This method had the effect of securing for him the most punctual service, and it was of the greatest convenience to the courtiers.

He treated his valets very well, especially those of the Inner Rooms. It was among them that he felt most at his ease and became most expansive. The friendship or aversion of these individuals often had great results. They were always in a position to help or injure others with the King, and they recall the powerful freedmen of the Roman Emperors, whom the Senate and great men of the Empire courted and basely flattered. Throughout this reign the valets were no less considered and no less courted. Even the most powerful ministers were openly careful to keep on good terms with them, and the Princes of the Blood treated them in the same way. The office of First Gentleman of the Bedchamber was more than eclipsed by that of First Valet of the Bedchamber, and it was only thanks to the goodwill of the inferior officials that the more important ones kept their posts. The insolence of the former was proportionate to

their power, and could only be endured by avoiding coming in contact with it.

Louis XIV.'s gallantry was proverbial, and he gave it the rein in his marvellous Court fêtes, of which the ladies were the principal ornament. It was with the Queen his mother and the Comtesse de Siossons that he had acquired his wonderful polish of manner, which was increased by the companionship of his mistresses. His air of dignity was tempered with gaiety; but his smallest gesture, his bearing, his gait, his countenance, all were noble and grand and at the same time quite natural—the effect of habit assisted by a regal presence and a fine figure. On serious occasions, too, such as interviews with ambassadors and ceremonial functions, there never was a more imposing monarch; and those who were to address him were wise if they accustomed themselves to his appearance beforehand, lest they should be struck dumb in the middle of speaking. His answers on such occasions were always short, just, and accurate, and it was very seldom that they did not include something courteous, or even flattering if the speech deserved it. And the respect induced by his presence wherever he was imposed absolute silence, and indeed a kind of awe.

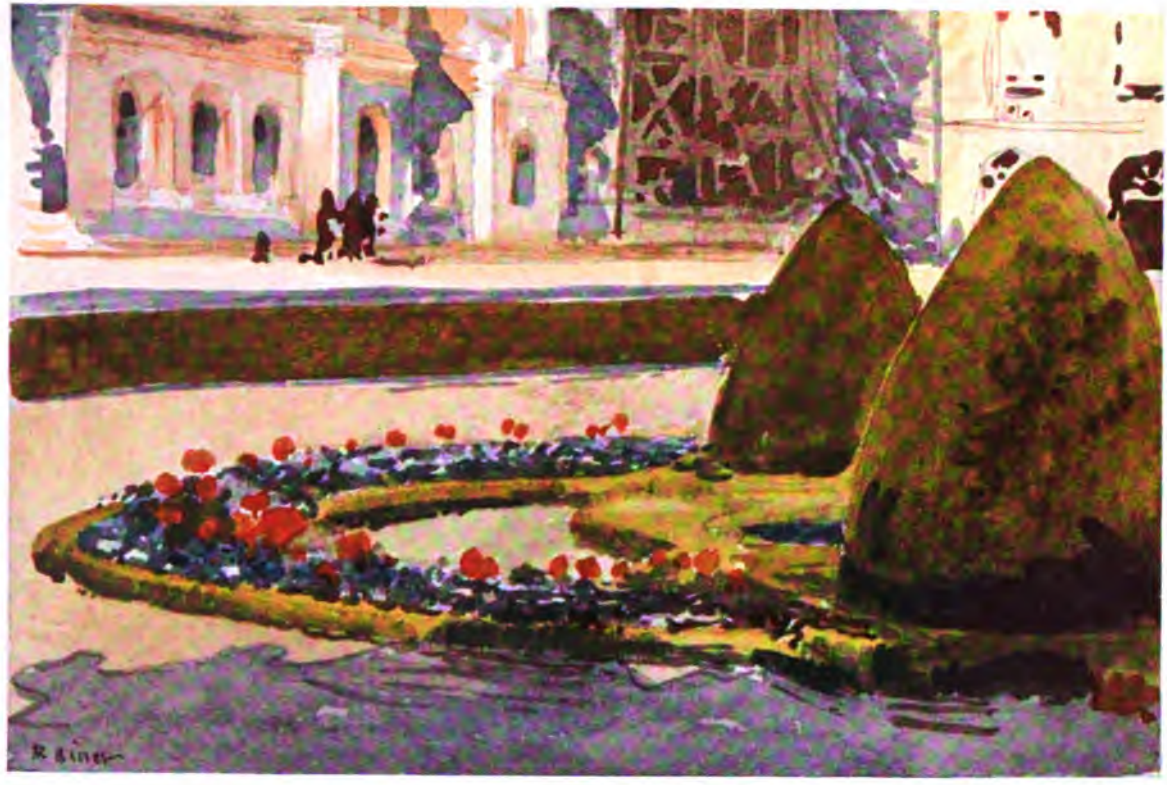
He liked to take as much exercise in the open air as his strength would allow. He had once excelled

in the dance, and in the games of mall and tennis. As an old man he was still an admirable horseman. He liked to see all these games and sports practised with grace and skill. For a man to acquit himself well or badly in his presence was meritorious or the contrary. He said that in unnecessary things of that kind it was better to leave them alone altogether than not to do them well. He was very fond of shooting, and there was no better shot than he; he insisted on having first-rate setters, and always kept seven or eight in his own rooms, where he liked to feed them himself in order that they might learn to know him. He also enjoyed stag-hunting, but he followed the hunt in a carriage after he broke his arm while hunting at Fontainebleau. He drove alone in a little, light, two-wheeled carriage called a *soufflet,* drawn by four little horses, which were changed five or six times, and he drove these at breakneck speed with a skill the best coachman did not possess, and with the same grace that he showed in everything. His postillions were children, varying in age from nine to fifteen years, and he guided them himself.

He liked profusion, splendour, magnificence in everything. He made a principle of this taste for reasons of policy, and inspired the whole Court with it. Those pleased him best who conformed to it in the table they kept, in their clothes, their carriages,

their buildings, and their card-playing. These habits gave him opportunities for conversing with people: but perhaps his real motive was that by these means he succeeded in draining the fortunes of his courtiers, and that by making luxury honourable he made it impossible for any one to live except by his kindness. He also found a satisfaction to his pride in holding so splendid a Court, and in the great medley of people, which gradually destroyed natural distinctions and thereby enhanced the greatness of the King's unique position.

After the year 1709 Louis XIV. experienced the most terrible troubles, which in one way only increased his renown, and placed it on a more solid foundation than all the glitter of his conquests and the long tale of his prosperous years had ever done. His greatness of soul remained unshaken during these long reverses; his sorrows at home and his misfortunes abroad in no wise broke down his courage. Seeing him left without resources his enemies abroad laughed at his powerless position, and sneered at his past glory; but he, in the midst of his domestic troubles, preserved his constancy, his firmness of character, his equable temper, his unchanging determination to remain at the helm of affairs, his hope against hope, and this through courage and wisdom, not through blindness. The preservation of this un-



THE SOUTHERN PARTERRE

changing front is what few men would have been capable of; and it is by virtue of this that he deserves the name of Louis *the Great,* which was given to him so prematurely! It was this, too, that gained him the admiration of all Europe, as well as that of the subjects who had witnessed his strength and firmness, and that won back to him so many hearts that had been alienated in the course of his long and arduous reign. And Saint-Simon says that he could humiliate himself in secret under the hand of God, recognising His justice, and imploring His mercy, without lowering himself or his crown in the eyes of men.

This honourable ending of his life, which redeemed the excesses due to his pride and the faults due to his passions, must be attributed to the sincerity of his Christian sentiments and to the influence of Madame de Maintenon, of whom many evil things have been wrongfully said because she had many enemies. Impartial historians of to-day recognise unanimously that Madame de Maintenon had many sterling qualities, rendered the King great services, often counselled him wisely, and was indeed, as his unacknowledged wife, the good genius of his old age.

The Queen had died in the year 1683. The first of the King's bereavements towards the end of his reign was the death, in 1701, of his brother Monsieur, for whom he had much affection, in spite of sundry dif-

ficulties that arose between them from time to time. Their most serious quarrel concerned the marriage of Mademoiselle de Blois, Louis XIV.'s natural daughter, with Monsieur's son the Duc de Chartres. No one but the King desired this marriage; all the other interested persons cared very little about it, and the Princess Palatine, Monsieur's wife, even regarded it with apprehension as an indignity to her son, and was so much annoyed with him for agreeing to it that she actually boxed his ears in public. The wishes of the monarch, however, were carried out; but the Duc de Chartres was not exactly gallant to his young wife, who openly complained. The matter formed a constant subject of discussion between the King and Monsieur his brother. One morning the scene had been more than usually violent, and when they came and sat down to the table Monsieur's face was red and inflamed, and his eyes sparkling with anger. Seeing the colour of his face, one of the ladies at the table, and some of the courtiers remarked that Monsieur was in great need of being bled. The King, too, in spite of the quarrel, advised him to be bled every day. Tancrède, his chief surgeon, was unskilful and unsuccessful in bleeding, but rather than hurt his feelings Monsieur refused to be bled by any one else, and thus chose to die in consequence. On the evening of the day on which the dispute with

the King had taken place Monsieur, who had returned to his charming palace of Saint-Cloud, began to feel the symptoms of the congestion of which, a few hours later, he was to die. Louis XIV. hastened to his side. The King wept easily, and had therefore melted into tears; he had never had reason to feel anything but the tenderest affection for Monsieur, and although he had not been on good terms with him during the last two months, the sadness of the moment revived all his affection. Perhaps, too, he reproached himself with having hastened his brother's death by the scene of the morning, and, moreover, Monsieur was younger than himself by two years, and had been as strong as he all his life. . . . Three hours after his arrival the King, seeing the chief surgeon M. Fagon, whom he had ordered to remain with Monsieur till he was dead or better, said to him: "Ah, then, M. Fagon, my brother is dead!" "Yes, Sire," was the answer, "no remedy was of any avail." The King wept bitterly.

In later years the bereavements of the royal family were frequent. First came the death of the *Grand Dauphin* in 1711. This prince was a very ordinary individual, who played a very obscure part. We may see his fat and unintelligent face in an interesting picture in the Wallace Collection at Hertford House,

beside the majestic figure of the King his father, and his son the Duc de Bourgogne. A fourth generation of the Bourbons is represented in the same picture, in the person of a little prince held in leading-strings by Madame le Duchesse de Ventadour, the governess of the children of France. This prince is the Duc de Bretagne, who was born in 1707 and died in 1712, and was replaced in the succession to the throne by his younger brother, born in 1710, who became King under the name of Louis XV.—the only male scion of this fertile line who was surviving at the time of Louis XIV.'s death in 1715.

Monseigneur, Louis XV.'s grandfather, had derived no profit from the excellent education he had received from the Duc de Montausier, and from Bossuet, the famous Bishop of Meaux: his very mediocre mind could not take advantage of it: by his own confession, after he was emancipated from his masters he never read anything but the *Gazette de France,* and moreover only the article relating to deaths and marriages.

Everything in him contributed then—natural timidity, ignorance, and the heavy yoke of education—to make him tremble before the King, who for his part omitted nothing that could encourage this terror to last as long as he lived. In spite of Monseigneur's complete initiation for many years into all affairs of

State, he never exercised the smallest influence in them.

It was at Meudon that he died while he was still quite young. His death-agony lasted for more than an hour, during which time he was unconscious. The King was in the room next to that of the dying man; and Madame le Duchesse and Madame la Princesse de Conti divided their attentions between the two, for the King seemed greatly distressed, and they frequently returned to him; while the distracted physicians, the bewildered valets, and the whispering courtiers hustled each other, and ran ceaselessly up and down in the same spot. Finally the fatal moment arrived, and Fagon the physician came out to impart the news. The King, who was much moved and greatly pained because his son had not been able to make his confession, was a little harsh to the chief physician, and was then led away by Madame de Maintenon and the two princesses.

On hearing the news of Monseigneur's death, his two sons, the Duc de Bourgogne and the Duc de Berry, could not restrain their grief. The Duc de Bourgogne wept bitterly, but gently; his tears were those of tenderness and resignation. The Duc de Berry, however, not only sobbed aloud, but gave vent to cries and screams. They ceased occasionally from suffocation, and then broke out again so noisily that

the greater number of those who were present burst out also into fresh expressions of grief.

After the death of his son the King experienced another equally distressing bereavement. The charming Duchesse de Bourgogne, whom he loved as much as his own daughters, expired at Versailles on February 12, 1712. The King's sorrow was terrible, and he shared his grief with his grandson, the bereaved husband, who himself died at Marly six days later; a circumstance which created a suspicion of poison in the minds of the Court. The rumour was much discussed, but apparently had no foundation of fact. The Duc de Bourgogne was quite young when he died, and was full of excellent qualities; he was the dearest hope of France. After a stormy childhood, during which his teachers had many a battle with his pride, his vanity, his caprices, and his tempers, the pupil of Fénelon, Archbishop of Cambrai, gradually developed into the most perfect of young men. He had already won distinction in the army, with the Marshal de Villars. He loved his grandfather the King, and his brothers, but above all he loved his young wife. The tenderest fibres of his being were torn by the pain of her loss. "His piety," writes Saint-Simon, "sustained him by the most prodigious efforts. The sacrifice was complete, but it was bloody. In this terrible sorrow there was

nothing base, nothing small. One saw a man beside himself, trying to preserve his balance, but failing in the struggle. It soon ended his days. But, great God!—what an imitation of Jesus Christ upon the Cross! What marvellous detachment! What eager transports of thanksgiving for being saved from the throne and from its responsibilities! What a splendid idea of the infinite mercy! What a pious and humble sense of fear! . . . He died! The earth was not worthy of such a prince; he was already ripe for an eternity of bliss!" This passage on the virtues of the Duc de Bourgogne is famous in the literature of France of that period; and it shows us that the Duc de Saint-Simon, whose testimony was so malicious and unjust in the case of such of his contemporaries as he accounted his enemies, could be enthusiastic and full of admiration for those he liked. He seems, indeed, to have regretted that Louis XIV.'s excellent grandson did not come to the throne, and that the crown of France should have devolved, after the Duc d'Orléans' short regency, upon that youthful prince of feeble character and incomplete moral training who became Louis XV.

Chapter Seven

THE GRAND TRIANON

IN leaving the park of Versailles at a point beyond the Basin of Neptune we come, by way of a wide path overshadowed by trees, to a gate, where the presence of a guard-house indicates that we are at the entrance to another demesne. If we advance a few steps we see a building of somewhat unusual contsruction—a large one-storeyed erection with two wings projecting in front, the whole surmounted by an Italian roof. The court is enclosed by a trench. This is the Grand Trianon.

The Grand Trianon, which was so called after the Petit Trianon came into existence, originated in the caprice of a royal mistress. It was to please Madame de Montespan that Louis XIV. selected this unknown corner for the site of one of those erections that were both his glory and his folly. There stood here at that time a wretched village, in the middle of the lands belonging to the Abbey of St. Geneviève of Paris. The name of this village was Trianon. The

THE PARTERRE D'EAU

land was joined to the demesne of Versailles, the houses were taken down, and gardens were made. The little château was built in a few months, during the year 1670. "This palace," says a contemporary writer, "was regarded at first by every one as a work of magic, for it was begun only at the end of the winter and was finished in the spring, as though it had sprung from the earth with the flowers of the gardens that came into being with it."

This was the first surprise of the kind that the King's architects perpetrated—one of those feats of skill with which they liked to please the monarch, and which they often accomplished, knowing that their master did not care to wait long for the realisation of his desires. The reign was at this time passing through its most prosperous period; France was every day rising in the estimation of Europe; the successes of Louis XIV.'s diplomatists and the victories of his generals were countless. Two years before, at the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, Flanders had become French territory, and the war with Holland, which was being planned in the royal councils at the château of Saint-Germain, was about to add Alsace and Franche Comté to the possessions of the Monarchy. Louis the Great was about thirty-two years of age: he had not yet definitely established himself at Versailles, but he came thither very often, for he

took great pleasure in this spot to which his father had been so much attached: he had already altered and enlarged Louis XIII.'s little château, and fresh transformations were soon to begin.

From that moment the King began to dream of transporting the Court to Versailles, and the neighbouring château of Trianon benefited from his resolution. It had a large share in the royal favour; in the year 1670 alone 1,800,000 *livres* were spent on it; and of this sum 155,000 *livres* were simply for the actual masonry, the rest being spent in buying marble and looking-glasses, and in decoration. All the famous artists were engaged in the work; artists who were soon to be employed in the Palace of Versailles, such as the sculptors Le Hongre, Massou, Le Gros, Houzeau, and Mazeline, with Jouvenet, who adorned the upper part of the house with ornaments in gilded lead representing cupids chasing animals.

Every one who saw this charming house wished to have a Trianon of his own, and the name almost became a common noun. "Nearly all the noblemen who had country houses," said the *Mercure Galant* in 1672, "had built Trianons in their parks or in the secluded corners at the end of their gardens; some of the *bourgeois* had arranged houses *en Trianon,* or at all events a room in their houses, or some kind of turret." A great number of prints are still in

existence representing Trianon at this period, viewed either from the side of the Avenue de Versailles or from the gardens. The object of the work of all these engravers was to satisfy the curiosity of the public of their own day, but as it happens they have also been of service to ours, for the first Trianon no longer exists.

The decorative scheme of this first palace, to which were attached four little pavilions for the servants, all exactly alike, consisted of plaques and other ornaments in faïence, in allusion to which the place was nicknamed the Porcelain Trianon. It was the same inside, "where everything was adorned in the manner of the works of art that come from China." The explanation of this curious scheme of decoration, which seems so much opposed to everything else that has descended to us from Louis XIV.'s day, lies in the fact that the taste for Chinese art was just coming into fashion. The missionaries had published their first descriptions of the Far East; lacquer, grotesque figures, porcelain, and painted stuffs were beginning to appear in Europe; collectors were quarrelling over the most bizarre objects; and the famous Porcelain Tower was exciting the astonishment of every French architect. The architect of Trianon employed, to simulate porcelain, the materials he had at hand, faïence and

plaster. It is of real interest, in the middle of the century characterised by dignity and pomp, to see these symptoms of an amusing fashion that was soon to take so firm a hold on the imagination, not of France alone, but of all Europe.

The greatest beauty of Trianon was the garden. The large green-house with its framework of wood, where the fruit-trees of the south were growing in the soil, was a novelty in these latitudes and created much astonishment. The King employed a quantity of gardeners in it, who supplied him with an abundance of flowers.

The summer flower-beds were quickly renewed by a method of some ingenuity. "There was a prodigious quantity of flowers," says the Duc de Luynes, "all growing in pots of sand and planted in the borders, so that they could be changed, not merely every day if it were desired, but even twice a day! I was assured that there had been as many as 1,900,000 pots at once, either in the borders or in the storehouse." This constant variety, these changes taking place under the very eyes, which gave a sense of magic intervention, were particularly pleasing to the King. One detail will suffice to show the characteristics of the garden of Trianon under Louis XIV. It was filled, apparently, with all the most strongly scented flowers, such as jasmine, heliotrope, tuberoses. A

little room in the palace was entirely filled with them, and was called the Perfumed Chamber. When the Siamese ambassadors visited it in 1686 these Oriental, we are told, "admired the way it was perfumed with flowers."

In 1674 the garden was planted and the palace finished. The first fêtes were held there on the occasion of the return from Franche Comté, for Louis XIV. chose Versailles and Trianon for the celebration of his victories. The fêtes lasted for six days. On July 4 Quinault's *Alceste* was played in the marble court at Versailles. On the second day, July 11, the King spent the evening at Trianon, where a large eight-sided room had been built of leafy branches, with a dome adorned with garlands, through which the sky could be seen. On one side of the entrance an opening had been made, behind which appeared a basin and a jet of water; and all round it there were statues of satyrs and nymphs, arranged in niches, and playing on various musical instruments. This was the imaginary orchestra to which the spectators were supposed to be listening. The real musicians were on a platform that surrounded the room; and the Court encircled the King, whose seat faced the doorway with the fountain. Here Lulli's music was performed, with some songs forming an interlude by Quinault called

L'Églogue de Versailles. Having been apparently much pleased with the music, the King left Trianon and roamed about until nine o'clock in the evening in the park of Versailles, where supper was served in the open air, among the trees.

At that time, says Saint-Simon, Trianon was nothing but "a porcelain house where one could go to eat and drink." The King entertained ladies there. The Queen went there sometimes without him, with her own ladies. Madame de Sévigné writes on June 12, 1675: "The Queen went yesterday to a repast at Trianon; she got out at the church, and again at Clagny, where she took Madame de Montespan into her carriage and drove her to Trianon with her." Dangeau mentions all the supper-parties. For instance: "There was a fête at Trianon, where four tables were laid: the walking and dancing went on for a long time." And another day: "The King entertained Madame la Dauphine and the ladies at supper at Trianon. After supper he walked on the terraces."

The King enjoyed being at Trianon very much. Everything in the place was his own work, and no one's imagination had been beforehand with him there. The Grand Canal had been completed, and its right arm extended to the gardens and to the rising ground where the "house of porcelain" stood.

This made it possible to make expeditions on the water, and increased the charm of the spot. But the King would have liked to be able to sleep there, and spend several days in the place. There was no room for this, and none of the arrangements were suitable. He decided, therefore, to do away with the pavilions, and instructed Mansart to build him, on the same site, a really habitable place.

To this ostensible reason for the King's resolution we may add another less open one, of a more intimate nature. The porcelain Trianon had been built for Madame de Montespan, and all Versailles knew it. The King could not help thinking of this fact, and being reminded of his mistress in every corner of the little house, in the ornaments that reflected her taste, and in the dainty luxury that had fulfilled her wishes. Now, in 1687, Madame de Montespan was no longer at Court, and was, moreover, very far from the heart of the King. Queen Marie-Thérèse was dead, and Louis XIV. was entering upon a new life. The monarch's passions were growing weaker and, influenced by his morganatic wife, Madame de Maintenon, he was turning to the practices of religion. Was it to please the Marquise, in her jealousy of the past, that he destroyed the first Trianon? It is very possible; and moreover he himself was assuredly anxious to de-

stroy a monument raised in honour of his former follies.

In the building of the new château, in which Trianon was to take its final form, François Mansart was employed, with his usual collaborator Robert de Cotte. To Robert de Cotte is attributed the glazed peristyle in the Italian style which unites the two wings of the present palace. The sculptors of Versailles were despatched to Trianon, where they worked for two years. The decorations executed by these ingenious artists have now almost entirely disappeared. After the Revolution the most beautiful portions of them were allowed to perish, more particularly the statues, the groups, and the vases that surmounted the balustrade of the cornice with such a harmonious effect. The balustrade has now rather a bare appearance.

The two principal suites of rooms were those of the King and the Dauphin, which were separated by the great peristyle. There was a chapel and a little theatre. A long gallery, projecting towards the gardens, served as a hall for entertainments; another body of buildings joined it at right angles and contained rooms for such members of the Court as were invited as guests: this was the part known as *Trianon-sous-Bois,* on account of the trees by which it has always been surrounded. This addition is

THE PALACE FROM THE SOUTHERN PARTERRE

of later date than the original plan, but is also due to Louis XIV.

The King went from time to time to inspect the progress of the work. In November, 1687, at the end of the annual visit of the Court to Fontainebleau, he started in the morning, dined on the way, and arrived at Versailles at three o'clock in the afternoon. His first care was to assure himself that the work at Trianon had been progressing well during his absence. Taking with him Madame de Maintenon and Madame de Montchevreuil he went to visit his building operations, in which he saw a great advance. The architects and workmen were much encouraged by his presence. During the two months that followed his return he visited the place several times a week, and when he went to dine at Marly he always returned by way of Trianon. At last in January, 1688, he dined in the new palace in the company of the "Grand Dauphin," Madame de Maintenon, and some of her friends, namely Mesdames de Noailles, de Montchevreuil, de Saint-Géran, de Mailly, and de Guiche. In February there was another dinner and other guests, " Mesdames de Maintenon, Princesse d'Harcourt, de Chevreuse, de Beauvilliers, Comtesse de Gramont, de Mailly and de Dangeau. After dinner the King wished to watch all the ladies working, and from time to time he

walked with them about his new house, and gave orders for its embellishment." In the details given by Dangeau we see here a pleasant side of Louis XIV., with the little airs he assumed as a proprietor and builder.

Trianon was completely finished by the end of 1688; it was even entirely furnished and ready to be occupied. Nothing had been neglected that could efface the memory of the marvellous little building that had been destroyed. The sculptors had been followed by the painters, Le Brun, Allegrain, Mignard; the Coypels had painted the panels for the rooms, and in his the Dauphin had placed four landscapes by Claude Lorrain, which are now in the Museum of the Louvre among the best examples of that master's work. All the furniture was covered with crimson damask brocaded with gold: marble appeared everywhere, and as for the general effect, Saint-Simon, hostile as he always is to Louis XIV.'s buildings, cannot forbear describing Trianon as "a palace of marble, of jasper, of porphyry, with delicious gardens."

This charming spot soon became an object for constant expeditions on the part of the King, who sometimes slept there, and remained for several consecutive days. Apartments were assigned to all the royal family. Those of Madame de Maintenon ad-

joined those of Louis XIV., who was able to see her more conviently than at Versailles: here, as at Marly and Fontainebleau, he indulged in the pleasure of long visits in the morning, which were for him, more than for her, the happiest moments of the day. At Trianon he gave himself a rest from the restraints of etiquette, from receiving ambassadors, from the public dinner and the private *lever,* from the thousand details in the business of being a King, which did not really weary him, but made him conscious of the pleasures of repose. He gladly changed the large palace for the little one, which was, as it were, his country house. "He tasted there the joys of seeing the trees pruned under his eyes, and of living like a simple country gentleman."

For Trianon was not a residence of the Court like Marly or Fontainebleau; the King's visits there, whether they only lasted for an afternoon or for several days, were always unceremonious; if he took any one with him it was some one he liked. "The King often dines at Trianon," writes Dangeau, "and as a rule takes with him Madame la Duchesse (de Bourgogne), Madame la Princesse de Conti, and the ladies; the courtiers do not go." The King, who loved to surround himself with women, himself selected the privileged ones. They always went without their husbands, and when the King wished

to mark his displeasure with the Duc de Saint-Simon he took to inviting the latter's wife regularly to Trianon and never to Marly, because the husbands accompanied their wives to Marly as a matter of right. During this period then, the Duc was unable to go anywhere, and the King contrived to load Madame de Saint-Simon with favours, since she had done nothing amiss.

It is easy to believe that these invitations were much coveted in the feminine world of Versailles. It was considered even more desirable to be included in the invitations to Trianon than to take part in an expedition to Marly. As was only natural, the choice fell most frequently on Madame de Maintenon's friends, Mesdames d'Heudicourt, de Rochefort, d'O, de Maulevrier, de Montchevreuil, de Saint-Géran, de Lévis, de Chevreuse, and de Dangeau. The conscientious chronicler of these details of Court history never omits to record the names of the ladies invited, and every time that he is able to mention Madame de Dangeau it is obvious that this flattered husband takes as much pleasure in the fact as the King no doubt took in the society of the pretty Marquise.

On summer days when no council was held and the morning was therefore free, the King, after Mass, started for Trianon with the ladies, and dined

there. Dinner was at one o'clock, as at Versailles. After dinner the minister arrived who was to work with the King. They were shut up for an hour or more, according to the amount of work there was to be done. The whole of the rest of the afternoon was consecrated to the chase, to walking about the place, and to games, such as the *dial of the turning ring, portico,* and billiards. The King often arranged a lottery for pieces of stuff, lace, silver, and jewelry of more or less value. This was a delicate attention to the ladies. They all drew, including Madame de Maintenon, but she immediately gave away her winnings. The King did not draw, but he took great pleasure in the agreeable surprises he had prepared for others. The ladies nearly always went down to the edge of the canal, where a portion of the flotilla was stationed. A short time was then spent on the water, where violins played the airs of Lulli; and at eight o'clock there was music or a play in the little theatre. The day ended with a supper served under the peristyle, within view of those beautiful gardens, which became more fragrant than ever in the evening air.

Towards the end of his life, however, Louis XIV. allowed his favourite retreat to be invaded by the crowd of courtiers from Versailles. Let us hear Saint-Simon on the subject: "I remember that one

summer the King took to going very often to Trianon, and gave permission, once for all, to the whole Court, men and women alike, to follow him thither; he gave a great banquet there for the princesses, his daughters, who took their friends there, and other women came there freely also whenever they wished. . . . Nothing could be more magnificent than these evenings at Trianon. The flowers in every division of the flower-beds were changed every day, and I have seen the King and Court leave the garden on account of the excessive number of tuberoses, of which the scent made the air fragrant, but was so strong on account of their numbers that no one could stay in the gardens, although they were of vast size and were arranged in terraces on an arm of the canal."

Very important fêtes were given there, and could bear comparison with those of Versailles. On the occasion of the return of the *Grand Dauphin,* who had taken part in the capture of Philipsbourg, a grand ballet was performed at Trianon by the ladies of the Court. The rehearsals for it continued through several weeks. The ballet took place before the King on January 5, 1689, and was performed on several occasions afterwards. The details of this fête are recorded. At three o'clock the King, the *Grand Dauphin,* and the princesses

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repaired to Trianon. Shortly afterwards the King and Queen of England arrived. James II. and his wife had just lost their throne, and were beginning their precarious life at the Court of France, the sad life of kings in exile. Louis XIV. did the honours of the palace, and showed it to them in detail: the courteous guests were full of admiration. The inspection over, the Queen began to play cards with Mesdames de Ventadour and d'Epinoy, while the two kings conversed for a long time. The usurpation of the Prince of Orange, schemes for a restoration, and the news of the continental war were the topics of conversation. They were interrupted by the arrival of a note from M. de Louvois, with the information that the Elector of Bavaria was approaching Heidelberg. At half-past five Madame la Dauphine arrived, and the ballet began. The Kings and the Queen of England were in the gallery with some ladies. The ballet was a great success: it was called the *Palace of Flora,* and the performers represented naïads and sylvan gods, and heroes and heroines of antiquity, who came to share in the rejoicings at the return of Monsiegneur le Dauphin, and to celebrate the victories won by the king and his son.

From the theatre of the Grand Trianon our thoughts pass naturally to the much more famous

theatre of Marie Antoinette. On its little stage were represented several of the fashionable operas that were being given in Paris. All the musicians and dancers came from Paris with their costumes. These performances always took place *en grand particulier,* to use the expression common at the time; that is to say, before a very limited audience. The King generally sat in the gallery with a few companions. As a rule, as soon as the ladies were seated, refreshments were handed round in baskets, and then the opera began.

Of all the women who visited Trianon the young Duchesse de Bourgogne most deserves to have her memory associated with it. The charming part she played in history is well known. Marie Adelaïde of Savoy arrived in France when she was but eleven years old, and thus became French at a very early age, and her spirits and gaiety brought a little brightness into the melancholy old age of Louis XIV. She charms us to-day as she charmed the King—the King whose many disillusionments had made him sad in his latter days. The Duchesse de Bourgogne was the spoilt child, not only of the Court of Versailles, but also of the *Grand Roi.* Saint-Simon informs us that "he placed his affections more and more on the princess, who merited them by a degree of thoughtfulness, tact, and charm beyond her years."

Trianon pleased the Duchesse, and the King had a suite of rooms instantly prepared for her. He himself took care that everything in them was attractive and well arranged, and in the details of these preparations he showed all the tenderness of a grandfather. The room he had destined for his grandson was the one that is now called the *Salon Frais,* at the end of his own suite of rooms. This salon overlooked the *Jardin des Sources,* and the surrounding trees and brooks kept it always cool. Here the Duchesse established herself during the summer of 1699, for she had conceived a great affection for Trianon. Her husband, Fénelon's pupil, the studious Duc de Bourgogne, had composed as a school-room exercise a fine eulogy of Trianon in Latin verses, in which he had compared it to Baiæ, Tibur, Tempé, and all the beautiful places sung by the classical poets. The Dauphine paid it a still greater compliment, in that she chose to live in it from time to time. She prolonged her visit there, even after the King had returned to Versailles. It was her garden and her palace; she gave fêtes and gathered her little Court round her there.

It was but natural that this princess, whom all the portrait-painters represented with flowers in her hand, should be charmed by the countless flowers of the beds and borders of Trianon. There were other

attractions to bind her to the place: the King, knowing her weakness for the game of mall, had made a ground where she and her ladies might play it. She had also a pleasure of a less innocent kind in lansquenet, a game that was already the chief amusement of the Court, and was to become in the next century a positive passion.

This was the darling sin of the little Duchesse, and a cause of continual relapses, for which she humbly expressed contrition to her "dear aunt," as she called Madame de Maintenon; and no doubt it was from Trianon that she wrote to her: "I am quite determined to mend my ways and to play no more at that wretched game, which only injures my reputation and weakens your affection, which is more precious to me than all. . . . I flatter myself that my age is not yet so advanced, nor my reputation so much tarnished, that I shall be unable to succeed with time."

This lovely princess had a whole circle of young women about her; and when the Court was at Versailles the usual meeting-places of this joyous band were Trianon and the Menagerie. The Menagerie was at the other end of the Canal, and contained animals of the rarest descriptions. There was a little château there, filled with the most exquisite furniture, and this had been given to the Duchesse de

CAR OF APOLLO AT SUNSET

Bourgogne by the King. She had a dairy there, and a poultry-yard, and all her little rural activities; very similar to those of a later day at Trianon, in Marie Antoinette's time. There was constant intercourse between the two houses, a constant passing to and fro of gondolas and boats on the two arms of the Canal. The Menagerie has been entirely destroyed, and replaced by an uninteresting farm: the important collection of animals it contained was made into the nucleus, towards the end of the eighteenth century, of the Jardin des Plantes in Paris.

The Duchesse de Bourgogne, who was indefatigable in the pursuit of pleasure, organised the fêtes for the Carnival of 1702, which were very gay, and recalled the best years of the old Court. Trianon was the scene of them all, as we learn from the *Mercure Galant,* which gives every detail of the incidents of each day.

On Shrove Sunday the King, having held a council in the afternoon, left Versailles at half-past five for Trianon. Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne arrived there a few moments earlier, "dressed as a Spanish lady." Two new plays were represented, and the King watched them from the gallery with Madame la Duchesse de Bourgogne beside him. Monseigneur, the princesses, and the princes were below in the body of the theatre. After the play a

great number of ladies remained, who had been invited to the supper; they were all magnificently dressed in gold and silver stuffs. The two great tables were filled; those, that is to say, of the King and Monseigneur. On leaving the table His Majesty, followed by the whole Court, proceeded to the salon at the end of the gallery, and there played at *portique*. The King passed the night at Trianon.

On the following day, Monday, the party returned thither, for the little Duchess wished to dine there with the King. Although the weather was bad she went into the garden with him after dinner, to see one of the new fountains that were so constantly being set up there. At about four o'clock the ladies arrived to hear the opera of *Omphale*. Destouches, the composer of the music, was in the hall, and after the performance was complimented by the King.

The princess returned the next day for dinner, for the King really could not exist without her. She then went back to Versailles to dress for the ball in the evening, and meanwhile the King drove for two hours, till the arrival of the ladies who were invited. The ball began at half-past ten. The orchestra had been cleared away from the theatre, which had thus been transformed into a ballroom. The ladies who danced were, in addition to the Duchesse de Bourgogne, Madame la Duchesse, Madame de Melun,

Madame de la Vrillière, the Comtesse d'Ayen, the Duchesse de Lauzun, the Comtesse d'Estrées, and were "all magnificently dressed in Spanish costumes." The other ladies were Mesdemoiselles d'Armagnac, d'Elbeuf, de Saint-Simon, de Souvré, d'Albret, de Chaumont, de Ravetot, and du Maretz. We will omit the names of the gentlemen who took part in the dances, which were opened by the Duc de Berri, the Duc d'Orléans, and the Comte de Toulouse; and on this occasion the Duc de Saint-Simon was present. By the King's desire his daughter, the Princesse de Conti, remained with him in the gallery. The Duchesse de Bourgogne had been unanimously proclaimed Queen of the Fête.

Another princess, very different to the pretty Duchesse de Bourgogne, had set all her affections on Trianon: the daughter of the Elector Palatine—as witty as she was malicious—who had married Monsieur, Duc d'Orléans and brother of the King. She was then called Madame, but now she is usually known as La Palatine. "There was much more of the man in her than of the woman; she was strong, brave, German to the last degree, . . . unsociable, always writing by herself, hard, rough, quick to take dislikes, with a thousand twists in her mind, yet not at all wanting in mind, with the face and churlishness of a Swiss, yet capable withal of

a tender and persistent friendship." Such was the mother of the Regent, according to Saint-Simon, the painter of this portrait, which is as convincing in its own way as that of Rigaud. The princess, who attracted people by her originality, repelled them by her ungraciousness. This being her nature "the Palatine" was terribly home-sick at the Court of France; she was never reconciled to what she called her exile. Her letters from Versailles were full of bitter judgments, prejudices, and exaggerated cynicism; they were coarse, and indifferent to all men and all things. She was even wearied by places; the Palace of Versailles seemed to her monotonous and cold, and she was not at all dazzled by the royal magnificence. One thing alone pleased her, the gardens. She often walked in them quite alone, and the King was flattered by his sister-in-law's admiration for the Great Park and the gardens, for his courtiers had very little taste in that direction. "No one but you, Madame," said Louis XIV. to her, "takes any pleasure in the beauties of Versailles." She also liked Trianon, which apparently was spared by her piteous mockery, and of which she often spoke.

Among those who frequented Trianon, we must not forget the natural daughters of Louis XIV., that pretty bevy of Princesses of the Blood who accom-

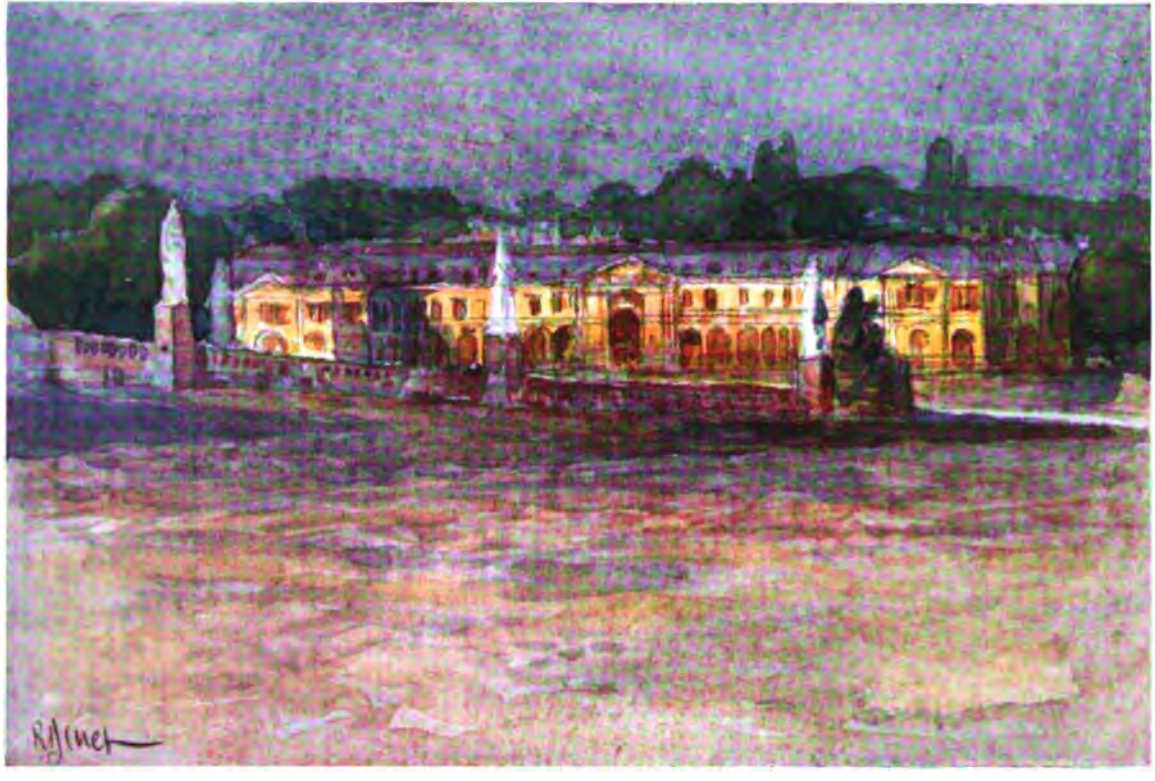
panied him on his expeditions, and sometimes tempered the etiquette and the stiff formality of the Court with the giddiness of their twenty years. They were (to give them their married names) the Duchesse de Bourbon, wife of the great Condé's grandson, the Duchesse de Chartres, wife of the future Regent, and the clever and charming Princesse de Conti, eldest of the three. The King loved them to the point of weakness, as though he felt he owed them reparation. The two former were the daughters of Madame de Montespan, who had won the King's heart from the gentle Duchesse de la Vallière, the mother of the Princesse de Conti.

The liberty and gaiety of Trianon amused the princesses greatly, after their marriage as before. They were even tempted to take advantage of their liberty, if we may believe an anecdote recorded by Dangeau and Saint-Simon concerning an incident that created some scandal at the time. The three sisters frequently went out in the night, when every one was asleep, and walked in the gardens together. One night the Duchesse de Chartres was mischievous enough to let off some crackers under the windows of Monsieur, the King's brother and her own father-in-law. The King, it appears, was in the secret. The crackers exploded, Monsieur awoke with a start, and guessed the authors of the mischief,

whose dresses were fluttering behind the trees. The next day he complained to the King, who was obliged to make excuses "for the princesses and himself."

It was at Trianon that Louis XIV. in 1695, at the time when the Duc de Bourgogne came of age, said to the courtiers round him: "We need have no fear of a minority in France; since the founding of the monarchy there have never been seen at one time a grandfather, a father, and a son of an age to govern the kingdom." We know how far this prophecy was justified; the *Grand Dauphin* died in 1711, the Duc de Bourgogne in 1712, and the grandfather was the last to go, in 1715, leaving the throne to a child five years old, Louis XV., son of the Duc de Bourgogne.

With Louis XIV. the brilliant history of the Grand Trianon came to an end. Under the Regency Trianon and Versailles were alike deserted. There is but one prominent event worth noting: the visit paid by Peter the Great in 1717, during his sojourn in France. The most interesting details of his travels are those that show us the inglorious side of the man whom La Palatine called "her hero." This is what we hear of his visit to Trianon! "The Czar, being at Versailles and Trianon, sent for sixteen musicians who entertained him for four days, especially in the evening, until three or four o'clock



THE GRAND STABLES

in the morning: at the end of which time he sent them back to Paris, without having paid them anything. At the Menagerie, after having seen everything of interest, he gave twenty-five sols to the turncock, who, overwhelmed by this largesse, regretted that he had not given him a good wetting while making the fountains play." The Czar fell ill at Trianon, and the indiscreet chronicler does not leave us in ignorance of the cause: "It was necessary to consult the disciples of Hippocrates, who proceeded in a *diligence* to Trianon, that delicious spot so full of charm, where Cupid had triumphed so often, and had now laid low one of the greatest princes of the world in the person of the Czar, and his travelling companion. These experts having paid their visit, one of them declared that he would not undertake a cure for less than four hundred pistoles. . . . Which greatly alarmed the prince."

One day little Louis XV. said to the Marshal de Villeroy: "My uncle, the Regent, always makes me go to Saint-Cloud or Vincennes; how is it that he does not take me to Versailles and Trianon? I do love Trianon!" The Court at last returned to Versailles, where the royal excursions and hunts went on as before; but Trianon was forsaken from that time forward, and only occupied at rare intervals, as, for example, by Stanislas Leczinski, ex-King

of Poland, when he came to visit his daughter, the young Queen Marie Leczinska, wife of Louis XV. Perhaps on account of this association Trianon seemed to please the Queen, and the King gave it to her in 1741. She would no doubt have preferred an increase of tenderness on the part of her royal husband, who was then beginning to neglect her.

The Duchesse de Châteauroux soon gained an ascendency over the heart of the King, in whose affections she succeeded her sister, the Comtesse de Mailly. She behaved with such haughtiness that she made numerous enemies, and she had a melancholy end. After being driven from the King's side at Metz, where His Majesty had fallen ill, she was recalled to the Court as soon as Louis XV. felt himself out of danger. Soon afterwards, those who had reminded him, when death was near, of his duty as a King and as a Christian, were sacrificed to the resentment of his mistress. Suddenly, in her house in the Rue du Bac, where in her recovered prosperity she was cherishing schemes of vengeance, the favourite died without warning. When the King heard of this catastrophe, being ashamed of his futile weakness and distressed by his unexpected loss, he went to hide his sorrow, which only increased the scandal, from his prying courtiers, and took refuge at Trianon. In spite of the time of the year, which

was December, he shut himself up there, with no companions but some ladies who had been the Duchess's friends. They declared that they saw him weep.

Thanks to Madame de Pompadour Trianon received a fresh lease of life. In 1749 a complete dairy, some poultry, and some aviaries were established there to amuse the King. Louis XV. was entertained by them for some time, and took an interest in the Marquise's fowls; then he grew tired of this pursuit as of every other, and the Duc d'Ayen persuaded him to take up botany. Trianon was the scene chosen for this study also. The gardener, Claude Richard, prepared for Bernard de Jussieu his famous field for experiments, and thus the King's caprice rendered an incalculable service to the cause of science. But botany wearied him: he turned his attention to building, and Gabriel erected for him a charming octagonal pavilion, flanked by four rooms "for conversation and cards." This pavilion has quite recently been restored. And soon, in the new gardens that were already known as Le Petit Trianon, there arose the new, convenient, and elegant château, which was inaugurated by the Comtesse du Barry, and where Marie Antoinette was soon to hold her Court.

From that time forward the royal favour was

chiefly bestowed on Little Trianon. The Grand Trianon gradually declined in historical interest, which none but Napoleon could revive. During the Revolution the botanical garden saved the two Trianons from the fate of Marly, which was entirely destroyed, being taken to pieces bit by bit till nothing was left standing. In order to turn the collections contained in this garden to the best account, the sale of the demesne—which now belonged to the nation—was postponed. Later on, when the first revolutionary fever was past, the interest that would attach to the preservation of the Trianons was understood by those in authority. Thus they escaped being sold, mutilated, or destroyed. When Napoleon wished to restore the old demesne of Versailles, he found them almost intact. The Emperor visited them for the first time in 1805, accompanied by the Empress Josephine: he gave orders for urgent repairs, for refurnishing the rooms, and replacing the glass in the peristyle, where it still exists. The two parks were, as they still are, separated by a sunk path. He united them by a bridge.

On the day that his marriage was dissolved, December 16, 1809, Napoleon came to the Grand Trianon, where he spent a week, while Josephine, for her part, retired to Malmaison. The imperial husband tried to divert his thoughts at this serious junc-

THE BASIN OF LATONA

ture of his life; for the separation from the woman he undoubtedly still loved caused him much pain. He hunted the stag in the forest of Saint-Germain, and went shooting in the woods round the Canal. "He lives," said an eye-witness, "in a state of unusual agitation."

Later on he returned several times to Trianon with the Empress Marie-Louise: he enjoyed going over there from Saint-Cloud, and he collected a fine library in the Salon des Sources, which was pillaged by the Prussians in 1815. He paid visits of several weeks in the years 1810, 1811, and 1813, to these little rooms that are still so interesting to the tourist, who may still see here a whole collection of furniture dating from that time. Empire writing-tables, console-tables, brackets, and even clocks, add to the beauty of the harmonious whole. The memory of the Emperor gives them a dignity that is all their own. No one asks how these rooms were furnished in the days of the Trianon's glory, when Madame de Maintenon lived in them. In the rooms where Napoleon worked, the rooms that he made for a while the centre of the government of his Empire, how can we think of any one but him?

Under the Restoration Trianon had no history. On July 31, 1830, after the Revolution in Paris that put an end to the "legitimate" monarchy, Charles

X., formerly the Comte d'Artois and the sympathetic friend of Marie Antoinette's gaieties, stopped here for a few hours on his way from Saint-Cloud to Rambouillet. Louis Philippe, too, on February 24, 1848, when he in turn was driven from the throne by a new Revolution, halted here in the course of his flight. It would seem as though the palace built by the *Grand Roi* were destined to watch the passing of the French Kings in their last hour of kingship, and to shelter them for a moment on the road to exile.

The Grand Trianon had been occupied on several occasions by Louis Philippe and his family. To him are due the important alterations by means of which the ground-floor was made sanitary. The kitchens and offices were placed in the basement, and hot-water pipes were established everywhere. The architect Nepveu was more successful here than at Versailles; it is true that the gilding of the panels was discoloured by glue, but at all events the general character of the palace was unchanged, and even the original arrangement of the rooms was preserved.

And even now the visitor, by a considerable mental effort, may imagine himself in Louis XIV.'s Trianon. Here on the left are the rooms occupied by the *Grand Dauphin,* and the now dismantled Salon des Glaces, on which 10,500 *livres* were spent in mirrors made in Paris by the Venetian method.

Here are the old rooms of Louis XIV., and the new ones prepared by Napoleon III. for the use of Queen Victoria, who never came to occupy them. Here we pause before the four magnificent pictures of Boucher, which adorn the Salon des Glaces; and here we enter Madame de Maintenon's little rooms in the *entresol.* These rooms are the most convenient and the most home-like of all, and were occupied successively by Louis XV., Stanislas Leczinski, Madame de Pompadour, and finally by Napoleon.

This list of names is an epitome of the whole history of the Palace. Further on, at the end of the great Gallery, are the rooms of Trianon-sous-Bois, which were used by the Duchesse de Bourgogne and La Palatine. This was the prison of Marshal Bazaine after the Franco-German War, in 1873, while the Council of War by which he was tried for treason was sitting at Trianon itself, in the great peristyle, which was arranged for the occasion as a court of justice.

The gardens of the Grand Trianon arouse admiration by their design as well as by their extent; and their partial wildness only adds to their dignity. Some of the paths laid out by Le Nôtre are covered with grass. We seek out the lonely spots that were once so decorative, the Halls of Diana, of Zephyr,

and of Flora, and the rest. Most of the artificial waters have been restored, and here and there in the middle of the fountains are little gilded cupids lying among flowers and holding baskets on the surface of the water. The principal basin, known as the *Plafond,* lies in front of the château, and is guarded by marine monsters. But the chief triumph of art in the gardens is the *Buffet,* built by Mansart, and also known as the Cascade of Trianon. Three high steps of variously coloured marbles are surmounted by gilded figures of Neptune and Amphitrite, with lions standing at their feet. On the middle step are three bas-reliefs, also gilded, while the lowest one is decorated with four masks and three vases of white marble. The little erection stands in a basin into which the water pours bubbling down from the summit in a series of cascades. It is charmingly ornamental, and has a very rich and happy effect even when there is no water.

The park of Grand Trianon is nearly as large in itself as the gardens of Versailles. It is seldom visited, and it is possible to walk in it for hours without meeting any one. The spot that is most often visited is the brilliant flower-garden, whose rich colours blend with the red marble of the façades. Beside it is a terrace which leads down, by great slopes arranged in the shape of a horse-shoe, to the

edge of the Grand Canal. This is the end of the right arm of the Versailles Canal. Opposite to us, at the end of the left arm, is the horse-shoe in front of the old château of the Menagerie. Here we may picture the pretty flotilla of the Court moving gaily hither and thither; the boats, with their fluttering flags, passing to and fro; and the beautiful women landing at the wide stone steps, which we may still see rising from the water to lead us to the gardens of Trianon.

Chapter Eight

THE PETIT TRIANON

THE Petit Trianon is more famous than the Grand Trianon. This is because it is bound up with the memory of Queen Marie Antoinette's fate, one of the most dramatic in history. We feel the poignant contrast between this delightful dwelling, this charming little château, this pleasant spot with its facilities for out-of-door pursuits, and the precincts of the Temple Prison, in which the Chatelaine of Trianon passed the last days of her life.

When, having passed through the gate, one stands in the well designed and proportioned entrance-court, facing the three storeys of the little square château, one's first thought is for the Queen who made this her favourite dwelling, the scene of her simple domestic pleasures, and so often came here to rest from the agitations and fatigues of Versailles. We must remember, however, that Little Trianon existed before the days of Marie Antoinette, for although it is re-

garded as the most finished model of the Louis-Seize style, it was in the time of Louis XV. that it was built. Madame de Pompadour's architect Gabriel designed it, and began to build it in 1762, while the Marquise was still alive. She had conceived the idea of it in order to give the King, who was so often bored, the interest of watching the building operations going on under his eyes, amid the farmyards, the homesteads, and the vast botanical gardens that he had already established at Trianon.

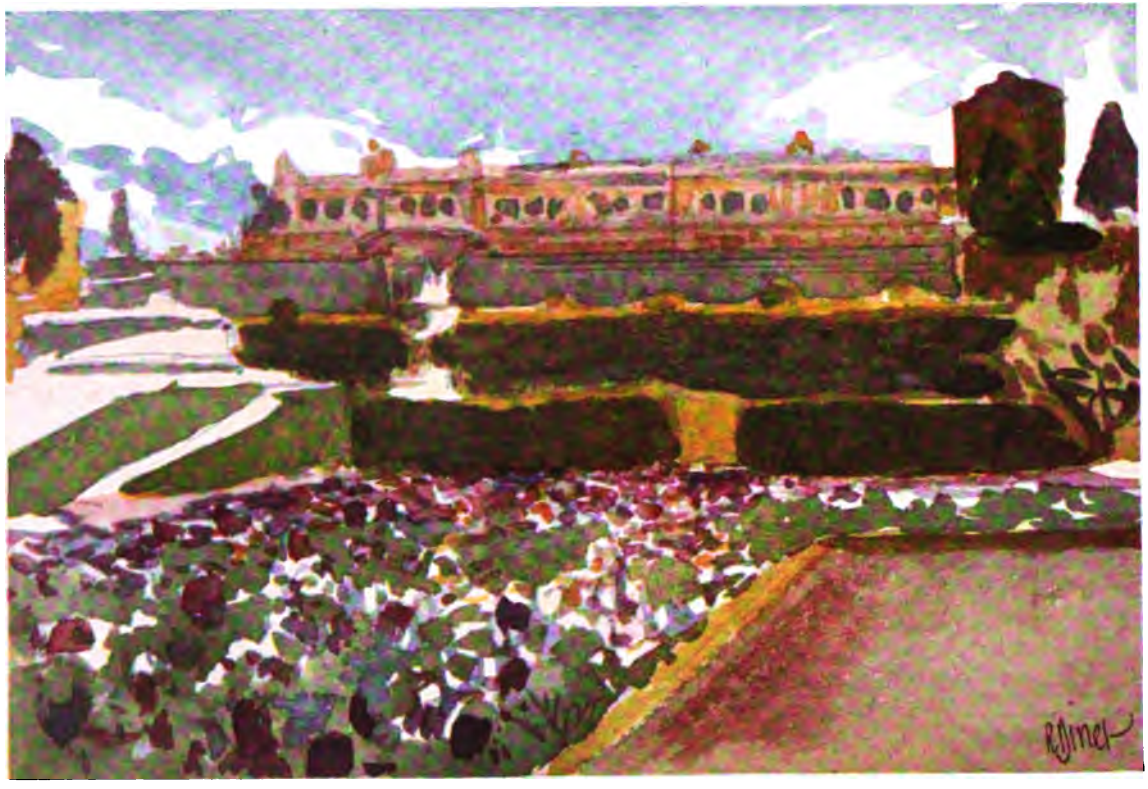
The building—carefully finished in every detail—was not completed till 1768, and the first associations attached to it are concerned with Madame du Barry. She much enjoyed walking in the gardens; she sometimes came here, too, to have supper with the King and some of their mutual friends, and these supper-parties, which the imagination of the pamphleteers transformed into positive orgies, were, on the contrary, perfectly decorous and marked by the most tasteful refinement.

Louis XV. fell ill while he was staying at Trianon in the spring of 1774, and was moved to Versailles, where he died. The young Queen Marie Antionette asked the King to give her Trianon for a country-house, as Louis XV. had given the first Trianon to Marie Leczinska.

Marie Antionette disliked the restraints of the

Court and the bondage of etiquette: she longed to emancipate herself, and found at Trianon the means of living a domestic life and, like a simple *bourgeoise,* presiding over a house and a garden. At first she merely gathered the royal family round her here and gave them little entertainments in the Orangery. In the afternoons the Queen went to Trianon attended only by two or three ladies; but soon she wearied of constantly seeing the monotonous plots of botanical specimens, and decided to move the whole collection to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris, and to use the space for pleasure-grounds in the new style.

The French style of garden was beginning to be replaced by the English style, which was then called Anglo-Chinese. A great number of country places and Parisian gardens had already been designed in this fashion, which corresponded with a general change in taste. Marie Antoinette's park was not the first in France, but it soon became the most perfect model of that style of park, since it was adorned unsparingly with everything that was charming and uncommon. First a lake was formed, and some rivers flowing in irregular curves; then an artificial rock and some alterations in the lie of the land were ingeniously arranged. On a hill that dominated the lake a belvedere arose, and sculptors and painters vied with each other in decorating it exquisitely. On



THE PARTERRE OF LATONA

a grassy island stood a light cupola, supported by a Corinthian colonnade and surrounded by reeds; this was the Temple of Love where Bouchardon's statue was placed: *Love making himself a bow out of the club of Hercules.*

The interior of the château is still very much as it was when Marie Antoinette occupied it. The staircase, whose walls are undecorated except for some carving, has a banister of wrought iron in which, among the lyres and caducei, Marie Antoinette's cipher was placed. On the left side of the landing is a door leading to the rooms in the *entresol* and to the staircase of the second floor, where the rooms of the Queen's guests were situated. The door on the right leads to the reception-rooms. The ante-chamber is decorated with friezes by Natoire. The dining-room, which comes next in order and has friezes by Pater, is remarkable for its woodwork, on which are carved a number of branches laden with fruit, horns of plenty, and other symbols connected with the uses of the room. Here we see, in addition to the full-length portraits of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, some pictures representing the latter dancing ballets with her brothers and sisters, the archdukes and archduchesses of Austria. The Empress Marie Thérèse sent these pictures to her daughter to remind her of her childhood.

The adjoining salon Marie Antoinette made into a billiard-room: and this, like the two preceding rooms, opens on to a large flight of steps leading down to a little French garden that dates from the time of Louis XV. The other façades overlook the English garden.

And now we pass into the large salon. The carved panels that are now white were formerly a very pale shade of bluish green, with the carvings picked out in white with touches of gold; the design being composed of garlands of wild flowers, and branches of lilies, the royal flower, surrounded by laurels. The furniture of those days was covered with crimson silk and gold lace; that of to-day has no pretensions save that of being suitable to the decoration and associations of the place. The pianoforte, it is plain, did not belong to the Queen, but it serves to remind us of the musical gatherings of Marie Antoinette's circle, to whom she sang the music of Mozart and Grétry. The following rooms, the boudoir, bedroom, and dressing-room, are in the *entresol;* here the ceiling is considerably lower, and the woodcarvings executed for Marie Antoinette are remarkable for their extreme delicacy. They consist of garlands of roses and jasmine, interspersed with doves, crowns, and quivers, with the lyre and the shield of fleurs-de-lys. On the pretty marble chimney-piece there is a bust

of Marie Antoinette, a specimen of old Sévres china: some of the furniture in the bedroom belonged to her, and the flowers sewn on the coverlet must have been embroidered for one of her beds, since her cipher and the King's appear in them.

It was in this room that Marie Antoinette lay ill in the spring of 1779, when she had the measles. A few months after the birth of her eldest daughter, Madame Royale, the doctors ordered her to leave the palace of Versailles while she was recovering her strength. She established herself at Trianon with her whole household, and violated all the customs of the Court by accepting four gentlemen as sicknurses: her friends the Duc de Coigny, the Duc de Guines, the Comte Eszterhazy, and the Baron de Besenval. This thoughtless action, in which the Queen saw only an innocent amusement, was the cause of a great deal of comment at Court, and was the origin of the malicious insinuations against her which became so common later on.

She grew more and more attached to her country-house. The Princesses of the Blood spent whole days there, and the King joined them sometimes on returning from the chase. The Queen showed herself to be an accomplished hostess, desiring only to please the friends she was entertaining. "The Queen," says an eye-witness, "remained sometimes

for a month at a time at the Petit Trianon, and had established there all the customs of country life: when she entered her drawing-room the ladies did not leave the piano nor lay down their needlework, the men did not break off their game of billiards or backgammon. . . . The Queen was accompanied by Madame Elizabeth, but dispensed with the ladies of honour and the ladies of the Palace. The invited visitors arrived from Versailles in time for dinner. The King and the princes came to supper regularly. A dress of white muslin, a gauze fichu, and a straw hat—such was the whole attire of the princesses."

Among the pastimes of Trianon we must not forget the merry-go-round that was set up on the lawn, under the shade of a pavilion in the Chinese style. But the most popular occupation of all was walking in the gardens: no one ever wearied of the endless variety of this carefully tended garden, whose praises were sung by the Prince de Ligne, a good judge of a garden and a friend of the Queen. When the latter was absent she allowed strangers to visit the place, which they were very glad to do, and the gardener Richard proudly showed them the Chinese and American trees he was trying to acclimatise, and the pines, larches, and junipers that he had brought from the Alps himself.

Sometimes fêtes were held at Trianon, and the doors were opened to large numbers of guests. Such, for instance, were the occasions when Marie Antoinette gave magnificent receptions to her brother the Emperor Joseph II. during his visit to France; to the hereditary prince of Russia and the Grand-duchess Marie, who travelled under the name of the Comte and Comtesse du Nord; and finally to the King of Sweden, Gustav III. Three hundred guests were then invited to supper; a thousand attendants were lodged in the dependencies of the château; the bands of the French and Swiss Guards played in the gardens, where the guests walked among the illuminations that lit up the shrubberies discreetly, and made the Temple of Love the most brilliant spot in the garden.

Knowing the taste for the stage that then prevailed, we can well believe that Marie Antoinette wished to add a theatre to her house. She had it built in 1780, and often sent for the troupes of the Parisian theatre. This resulted in extravagances and expenses that caused her to be much inveighed against, especially when the national finances began to be seriously embarrassed. Marie Antoinette incurred no less disapproval by appearing on the stage herself, and acting a play with her brother-in-law, the Comte d'Artois, and Madame de Polignac's set. She was,

however, indulging in a very harmless pleasure before a very limited public, and often in the King's presence. She performed the fashionable plays and comic operas, and the last she took part in was Beaumarchais's *Barber of Seville*.

No visitor ever omitted to repair to the further end of the park of Little Trianon, there to inspect the group of rustic houses that formed Marie Antoinette's Hamlet. The design and arrangement of these charming little houses were most carefully thought out by the Queen's experts in rural architecture, in order to ensure the most picturesque and pleasing views. The best view of the principal houses reflected in the water is to be obtained by walking round the lake.

The building of the Hamlet, which was finished in 1786, was the last flight of Marie Antoinette's imagination. It is in accordance with the taste of the time, which tended towards the life of the fields, and opposed the simplicity of rustic manners to the luxury and artificiality of the life of towns. The princesses, who were always surrounded by courtiers and lackeys, must have taken a real pleasure in drawing closer to the humble folk whom they had only seen in the far distance, in watching them attending to their various pursuits, and in studying their opinions and their simple language. For the Ham-

let was occupied by several rustic households, who lived on the spot and carried on real farming operations. The Queen established there the families of a farmer, a gardener, and a keeper. The farm, which stands a little aloof, and is approached by a private way, contained a splendid herd of Swiss cows, as well as calves, sheep, goats, pigs, and rabbits. There was a large poultry-yard and a dairy supplied by the milk from the farm; some of the milk was taken to the Queen's dairy, where she sometimes amused herself, with her friends, in making butter and cheese under the direction of the farmer's wife. The mill, moreover, which apparently was only made with a view to the picturesque, was used for grinding corn.

It was an innocent amusement for the Queen and her children to watch the work of this little demesne. There was even in the middle of the Hamlet a little dwelling for the royal family, larger and more ornamental than the other houses. It was tastefully furnished, and they often dined in it; the kitchens occupied a separate house at the back. An outer gallery, entirely covered with Virginia creeper, united the Queen's House with the *billiard-house;* in the latter the billiard-room was on the ground floor, and the little sitting-room on the first storey contained a library.

The Queen also had at her disposal a little house

called the *boudoir*, the interior of which was very dainty. The Queen's private dairy was all faced with marble. The little belvedere attached to it, overlooking the lake, was called Marlborough's Tower, in allusion to a popular French song: it was approached by an outside staircase, bright with stocks and geraniums.

No credence must be given to the numerous legends that are rife on the subject of the Hamlet, such as that which shows us the royal family playing at shepherds and shepherdesses, and assuming various rustic characters in order to live in the Hamlet. This is a ridiculous fable. Marie Antoinette never played at keeping farm, and the King never disguised himself as a miller; but it is a sufficiently piquant sight to see them interesting themselves so intimately in agricultural labour, and seeking recreation and rest amid these rustic surroundings.

The visitor to the Hamlet of Trianon must surely be deeply touched by such memories as these, and must wish these fragile little houses to be carefully preserved. Their thatched roofs and their appearance of absolute simplicity are an evidence of the taste of the period immediately preceding the French Revolution, and form an interesting contrast with the splendours of the neighbouring palace of Versailles.

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